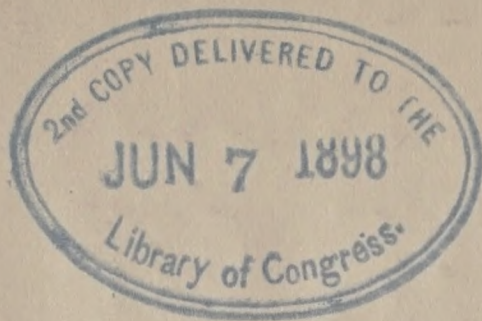


THE HETERODOX MARRIAGE OF A NEW WOMAN



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The Heterodox Marriage

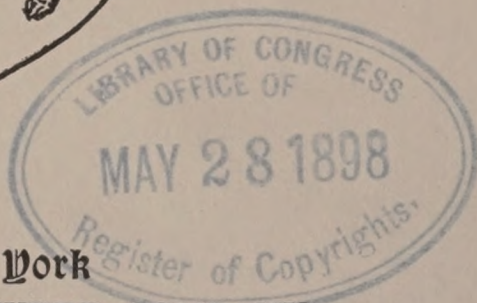
of a

New Woman

BY

Mary Ives Todd

AUTHOR OF DEBORAH, ETC.



New York

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AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED
TO MY DAUGHTER LOLA

“In the present day union in the name of the law is considered the most important, and union by affection as less important. A time will come when union by affection will be considered the most important and union in the name of the law the least important, and men will hold in reprobation those conjugal unions in which union by affection is dissolved.”

HERBERT SPENCER.

“We have thought to make our marriage tie stronger by taking away all means of dissolving it; but the more we have tightened the constraint, so much more have we relaxed and detracted from the bond of will and affection.”

MONTAIGNE.

INTRODUCTORY

“Call it no more the White City on the lake; it is Dreamland.”

—*John Brisbane Walker.*

IT was inevitable that the new woman of the twentieth century should be born and bred in that marvellous city of Chicago. Inevitable also that she should partake somewhat of the characteristics of the wonderful “White City” by the breezy lake. Let us dwell therefore for a moment on the push, perseverance and brains which bid fair to make this city America’s most characteristic centre of an ideal civilization.

Some cities, like some men, are born ripe for greatness, and nothing can seriously retard the fulfillment of their destiny. Chicago, more than any other city of fable or history, was so born; and her career from her birth in 1837, as a city of four thousand souls, up to 1893, with a population of a million and a quarter, has been one of god-like strides toward a unique greatness. Indeed, so undreamed of has her progress been, that jealousy on the part of those cities which once entertained thoughts of

rivalry, has long since given place to astonishment.

Still, notwithstanding this fact, Milwaukee easily remembers that Chicago got her name from a notorious little animal with a brushy tail; while St. Louis recalls upon occasion that her first settler was an ignorant, runaway slave.

Though these reminiscences appear damaging on the face of them, they are not so in reality. The idea is strengthened that everything connected with Chicago is marvellous in a way. The noxious little animal was a "marvellous scent propeller, prophetic of the time when the fame of Chicago should reach all lands and all peoples." The first settler was evidently a marvellous man; a marvel of pluck and daring, who freed himself from the trammels of slavery without waiting for the nation to do it for him.

The site chosen by Chicago as her birthplace was a marvellous combination of tangled morass and low-lying prairie, extending inland from "Lake Illinois"—the original name for Lake Michigan. It is agreed that her river, before Chicago took it in hand, was a languorous, stupid stream, finding its way to the blue lake in an oozing, dawdling fashion, fed by a brace of lakes as lazy as itself.

In 1837, when Chicago, the ugliest of Ameri-

can towns, asked to be incorporated as a city, her envious rivals at once declared her to be possessed of immense assurance. At this time her inherent characteristics of push and indomitable energy were scarcely suspected since she still squatted on her low, unhealthy site, and could no more venture a cellar than New Orleans. But upon becoming a city, Chicago determined to raise her grade, and, it is said, "proceeded in the most nonchalant manner to ladle in enough of the surrounding country to lift her streets eight feet high. Up into the air also went her houses." At this interesting period a person wishing to go a mile on State Street was obliged to walk over about two miles of steps.

At the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, Chicago had rounded her first one hundred thousand inhabitants; had doubled this number at the close of the war, and trebled it in 1870; while in 1893, the enterprising of the whole world were rushing through her thoroughfares bent on seeing her stupendous World's Fair.

A predominant trait, in addition to her push, energy, and will-power is her democratic freedom of manners arising from the fact that she is no respecter of persons. It is related that upon President Cleveland's notable visit to Chicago, when the big police force was made a part

of the triumphal procession, instead of being distributed along the line to keep the streets clear: that it was all the escort of Regulars and National Guards could do to force a way to the position assigned them; and, when the train rolled in and the massive form of the executive appeared on the rear platform,—with howls of jovial greeting the dense mass bore down upon him, the most fantastic mob of tatterdemalions ever seen outside of the Faubourg St. Antoine. Mrs. Cleveland's sweet, smiling face blanched at the sight,—it was soon after the Haymarket slaughter,—and the greeting, though doubtless well meant, was the most unconventional ever seen.

“How are you, Grove? Come down off your perch, old man, and give us a shake,” yelled the populace.

That charming writer on Chicago, Captain Charles King, from whom the above quotations are taken, states that the assurance of the people of Chicago is best typified by her numerous class of commercial travellers in whom, he thinks, is found the “peripatetic essence of cheek.” He tells the following story:

“Once and once only have I heard of him, the drummer, being temporarily silenced. A quiet-looking man was among his auditors and listened long and intently to his glowing de-

scriptions ; at last, as he paused to re-light his cigar, the quiet-looking man inquired :

“ ‘What did you say was the name of the place ?’ ”

“ The drummer stopped with the lighted match applied to the end of his weed and simply stared. The match flickered and went out. A bystander snickered and also went out, but only so far that he could hear what followed. At last the drummer recovered voice and replied impressively :

“ ‘I said Chicago.’ ”

“ ‘Chicago,’ queried the quiet man in the corner, pensively. ‘Seems to me I’ve heard the name. What road is Chicago on ?’ ”

“ This time the drummer dropped his jaw and cigar.

“ ‘What road? Shade of G. Washington! Where have you lived, man? Why, every road!’ ”

“ ‘That so? Odd, I don’t seem to recall it. What’s the name of the hotel in Chicago?’ ”

“ The drummer fled. Accosting the porter as soon as he could regain his breath, he inquired :

“ ‘Who on earth is that blear-eyed, red-nosed microbe sitting there by the window, the man who never heard of Chicago ?’ ”

“ ‘That, sir,’ grinned the porter, ‘why that’s

Mr. ———, of St. Louis. He's vice president of this road, sir.' ”

It goes without saying that when Chicago on October 8th and 9th, 1871, went in for a big blaze it was of sufficient magnitude to be viewed by every one of her three hundred thousand inhabitants, and to focus the eyes of the civilized world upon her. Over three square miles of her heart was burned, and she went to bed, after the fire, less seventeen thousand, four hundred and fifty buildings. But this city, which, according to the newspapers, is the city of many mighty states, and is a marvel because the West is a miracle, or according to Miss Bremer the home of Loki and Thor, the Supernatural Forces, proved after the fire that both the newspapers and Miss Bremer were right. Forty and two years had it taken to rear old Chicago. In a few short years the new Chicago was built after a marvellous pattern undreamed of by the old.

True, Chicago's fire was one of the seven wonders of the day, but what shall be said of her World's Fair in 1893? I throw down my pen in despair, and steal for a moment that of John Brisbane Walker.

“Did the conception spring from one brain like the Iliad? Were these buildings, every one to the unprofessional eye a miracle of beauty thus arranged so as to pro-

duce this marvellous effect of beauty by one master brain, or by many? For never before in any age, in any country, has there been so wonderful an arrangement of lovely buildings as at Chicago in the present year of grace! The hanging Gardens of Babylon, which some of us remember as belonging to a previous existence, were fine. There were some very fine things in Rome, especially when Nero was emperor and architect, but the common people saw little of his palace. In London, thirty years ago, there was a nice little show, and another, not without its points in Philadelphia, seventeen years ago. But, nowhere, at any time, has there been presented to the world any group of buildings so entirely beautiful in themselves and in their arrangement as this group at Chicago, which they call the World's Fair. . . .

“Those English travellers, who have written of Chicago, dwell upon its vast wealth, its ceaseless activity, its enormous blocks of houses and offices, upon everything in Chicago except the side of it which is revealed in the World's Fair. Yes, it is a very busy place; its wealth is boundless, but it has been able to conceive somehow, and has carried into execution, the greatest and most poetical dream that we have ever seen. Call it no more the White City on the lake; it is Dreamland.”

ONE

“The day of man has been. The day of woman is now coming. When the day of man and woman has arrived, when this king and this queen shall reign as equal sovereigns of the world then will come the true day of humanity.”

—George Willis Cooke.

IN one of Chicago's old-fashioned detached homes, during the fading glory of the World's Fair, a young woman might have been seen early every morning deeply engrossed in a newspaper. It was Rae Raymond, a typical Chicago girl, whom her mother often spoke of as her “incorrigible newspaper fiend.”

Ah, those early Chicago newspapers, so swift to bring the world's doings each day! So complete—even if sensational—a transcript of our busy sphere! Up-to-date, and in language all can understand,—nervous, vivid, sometimes witty, sparkling, or it may be, eloquent, if the subject admits of eloquence, but always entertaining.

Rae Raymond not only read eagerly many of the papers of her own wonderful city, but scrutinized those of other progressive commu-

nities as well. Indeed, a paper of any description rarely came in her way that she did not examine it with care, from the leading article at the beginning to the advertisements at the close.

Long practice had made her an adept in the art of culling the news from each paper, and probably few experts could hive its sweets with so sure and swift a glance as this new, charming, audacious Chicago woman. Rae often declared laughingly, when hard pushed in regard to her penchant for newspaper literature :

“Oh! I was born with a newspaper neatly folded in each hand, and so I have clung to them ever since. I shall probably end by spinning newspaper literature myself one of these days.”

Doubtless this singular proclivity could be accounted for from the fact that Rae sprang from a long line of newspaper men, her own father having been an editor of force and ability. A man, it is true, having an arbitrary nature and strenuous will, but who was, at the same time, a fearless exponent of what he considered “the fact of the business.” He had married somewhat late in life, more especially to secure an heir who would carry his name and his work on to future generations. The name of the coming great editor was selected, by

himself of course, with great care. It was to be Robert Roy Raymond, after an ancestor, great, though his deeds were unrecorded.

Editor Raymond was so used to carrying his point in the long, if not in the short run, that it did not occur to him to forecast failure in the sex of his heir.

But alas, nature since the advent of Eve, according to male tradition, has been perverse, and ever ready to do the wrong thing at the right time, and vice versa. And thus it was that at the right time it became a matter of record that "the fact of the business" was that a girl appeared instead of the coveted boy.

It would be a pity to deface this fair page by recording certain strong expletives which followed hard upon the nurse's startling and demoralizing intelligence. Indeed, so unstrung was nurse after the scene with the irate editor and new-made father of an unwelcome daughter, that it was some time before she could gather sufficient courage to appear with her little charge before the impatient mother.

"What did he say?" was the mother's first question, as she glanced with pardonable pride at the large, well-formed babe.

"I don't clearly remember," replied the nurse, with evident embarrassment.

"Tut, tut, you can remember something, if

you try," coaxed the proud mother, as she showered kiss after kiss on the little face of the sleeping child.

"It's a g-girl, you know," said the nurse, awkwardly, "and he was so put out. I can only remember 'devil' and 'damn' and 'mess.' I can't rightly put them together."

The new-made mother said nothing; only held out her arms for the babe, and it was noticeable how long and clinging was her next kiss and caress.

Since that long, tender kiss, something like twenty years have passed, and, in the midst of them has passed that irate editor, to a realm, where, let us hope, he was not greeted with such words as "devil," "damn," and "mess."

The name, Robert Roy Raymond, so carefully selected and insisted upon by her father, likewise has met with a change. Another failure on the part of the strong-willed editor to carry his point.

He did not foresee that his child, though a daughter, would possess a will and a way very like his own; and that she would insist just as stubbornly on carrying her points when her day should come.

In truth, only a fortnight had measured its length after her father's demise when that masterful young woman suggested,—it sounded

something like a command,—that henceforth her mother and intimate friends should call her Rae, for short, instead of “Bob,” her father’s pet name for her. She followed up her suggestion by remarking very quietly, but at the same time firmly:

“Hereafter I do not care to be called by a man’s name. Men are all very well in their way, but I was born a woman, something quite different but quite as good. I shall play a woman’s part in the world.”

Rae looked every inch an American queen as she closed her haughty little speech; and, probably no queen had ever been dowered with a form more truly superb than this Chicago girl, or with a face whose every line bespoke commingled strength and beauty. From her father came her majestic carriage and her strong, thoughtful brow with its straight eyebrows well apart over the clear cut nose with just a hint of the Roman in its outline. The sweet, curving, rather wide, full-lipped mouth together with the exquisite complexion and dainty chin were the contribution of the mother, in her days a Southern belle. It is impossible, however, to give an adequate idea of Rae Raymond’s eyes, her most distinguishing feature, since they changed so completely with her mood. At times they shone out radiantly blue from beneath her dark

brows with the majesty and serenity of the deep blue sky. Again, when her brows were knit with impatience or anger, her eyes appeared to contract and become pale green in color. Like old gold they seemed when she sat lost in dreamy meditation, or black, when in sparkling repartée she flashed out her thoughts rather than spoke them. Her face was framed with the usual brown American locks said to be indicative of a character always loyal.

“That is what I fear, Rae,” said her mother, who had been looking absently out of the window, “that you will play your part in life rather than work, which you might do so effectively if you once set about it; and, the play-life of a society woman, in the end, is the bitterest kind of play,—as I know by experience.”

This little conversation took place while Rae and her mother were seated in the latter's boudoir, which, with its dainty furnishings occupied the front of the second floor. Rae had, as usual, gone into her mother's room to look over the morning papers. Rarely was she more than two minutes in slipping out of bed and donning a warm woolen robe and wrap, and fleece-lined slippers, when she was ready to acquaint herself with the world's doings since yesterday. It was a regular morning's performance, and her mother, whose room commu-

nicated with the sitting-room by large folding doors, just as much expected to open her eyes on her handsome newspaper fiend when she awoke in the morning, as she expected presently to rise and dress.

"Well, Rae, what is the news?" Mrs. Raymond asked, after thinking for the thousandth time, "What a good editor is spoiled in Rae. Pity she is a woman."

"No news, mother, excepting Fair Notes. Just a continuation of the tariff gabble, the Hawaiian muddle, the money famine and consequent business failures. Just a continuation of the men's determination to manage where it is possible without woman's help. It appears now that the San Francisco gallants are thinking of having a fair in their city, and are planning to conduct it without the aid of the Fair. Reason why, women are so quarrelsome. That's sweet reasonableness! So in accordance with facts."

"What is in accordance with facts?" asked the mother, not quite comprehending.

"Why—that the men are the non-quarrelling sex par excellence. The dear, sweet, meek things! I tell you, mother," here Rae dropped her sarcastic tone, yet still speaking with strength and emphasis, continued: "the fact of the business is, the men have not ceased to

quarrel, judging by their own accounts of themselves, from the beginning,—whenever that was. Right at the start, as the men claim, we find Adam quarrelling with God about the woman He had made to be with him. Only one quarrel have they had, to be sure, but lasting up to the time of the Hawaiian quarrel now in full progress. And they are as ready now as ever, to say, ‘Depend upon it there’s a woman at the bottom of it.’ Pity that we women are necessary evils, otherwise they could make an end of our sex, rear men children only, and monopolize everything at once.”

Rae had lately been reading the history of marriage which had something to do with her impatience this morning.

Her mother spoke again: “Why, Rae, how different the girls of to-day are from my time. When I was a young woman we never spoke of such things, never considered that subject.”

“What subject?” asked Rae, who was again reading something which had caught her eye.

“The subject of having children,” replied the mother, with hesitation and embarrassment.

“Of course not! It’s a subject of no consequence, no importance,” replied Rae, without looking up. “Three suicides and two wholesale murders for California alone, pretty good!”

“Rae, dear, I wish you would not read the

kind of papers you do: then you would not know of the badness of the world and would be much happier. Or, if you must read some newspaper literature, please let our dear minister select it for you."

"Yes, I think I see myself going to your minister—St. Paul's double about women, for advice as to what I should read!" Rae spoke in her most scornful manner.

"Then there is no news this morning?"

"No, it is only the same old story, the monopolization and exploitation of the weak by the strong, with infinite variations. There is no news, old lady."

"Old lady" was a pet phrase Rae sometimes used for the mother whom she always recognized as her "best friend" and "best girl." It sounded lawless, undutiful, impertinent, yet the mother did not mind so long as Rae gave with it sincere love and whole-hearted comradeship.

But there was one thing Mrs. Raymond did mind, and, which haunted her with ever increasing dread, and that was, should Rae marry, what would become of her? Alas, for the rest of her life she must sink into a nonentity, and life itself become a hungry blank. She would belong to that hated class called "mothers-in-law," and after her daughter's marriage, would be afraid to so much as visit her, except for a

short time. Very naturally, Rae's husband would completely absorb and monopolize her to the exclusion of her mother. She well remembered how it had been in her own life, and her own mother, too, one of the best of women, as quiet as a mouse, as meek as a lamb and as holy and helpful as a Saint Theresa. How her heart ached even now, thinking of that lonely old mother so suddenly bereft of an idolized daughter, yet not by death.

Her pet idea in connection with Rae she had not as yet broached, and did not mean to for some time; not until Rae should have turned her first old-maid corner. That is, the first corner in these new days; time was when a woman of twenty-five was looked upon as completely shelved so far as matrimony was concerned. Of course, Rae being rich in her own right could always wed, but she was less likely to fall in love after her twenty-fifth year.

Accordingly, when that auspicious time arrived, Mrs. Raymond made up her mind to present her daughter with a new, charming, up-to-date "girl-bachelor home." She tried to fancy they would be girl-bachelors together. Why not? Girl-bachelors were of all ages, she had read the papers enough to discover that fact. That she once had been married—well, that should make no difference, she was perfectly free now to

choose her life ; they would live free, untrammelled, useful lives,—the regular girl-bachelor life ; do what they chose to do. Rae would eventually drift into newspaper work, while she would look up something to reform, or try her hand at philanthropy ; she had a full purse. As Mrs. Raymond lay back in her chair with half closed eyes, turning over these blissful fancies in her mind, Rae said suddenly :

“I must go back to Retta, she is doubtless getting up by this time.”

Rae stepped quickly to her mother's side, gave her a warm good morning kiss and then disappeared.

TWO

“It cannot be too often repeated that persons cannot be wedded whom Nature has not wedded beforehand. Nor can they be held together, except outwardly, and to their mutual degradation, whom Nature has pronounced divorced.”

—*Junius Henri Browne.*

HENRIETTA SPOFFORD was a bright and shining light in fashion's circles, and was regarded as a prize among marriageable men. This was chiefly due to the fact that this lovely belle was an heiress in her own right; it was known that her fortune was large, though how large her guardian took care should not be known.

Henrietta, when in her native city, Chicago, made her home with the family of her father's partner, who loved her with a devotion almost equal to that of her parents for their only and idolized child.

Her education had been carefully superintended, first by her parents, and when they had passed away by the wife of her father's friend

and co-partner. It embraced the best and most expensive culture not only in the new world but in the old.

It was while Henrietta was visiting and studying in one of Europe's brilliant capitals that she met Sidney Gordon, a late arrival from her own city of Chicago. Although Sidney had been born in New York and bred in Chicago, he was neither a true New Yorker nor a Chicagoan, any more than Beau Brummel was a true Londoner. These cities are in reality virile masculine centres of business, more than anything else; while this masculine exotic of fashion cared nothing for business. He had the manners of the Old English aristocracy, when time was a matter of comparative indifference, and, otherwise, was of the old order rather than of the new.

Sidney Gordon found his fair country-woman surrounded by admirers of every description, from decayed princes, whose chief claim to favor was their blue blood, to merchant princes whose redder blood flowed freshly in their veins, and whose claims to consideration were based upon gold rather than upon pedigree. But the flattering attentions of these various aspirants seemed nowise to disturb her sweet serenity. However, when she met Sidney Gordon for the first time at a brilliant social function it was

observed that a swift blush passed over her as their eyes met. It was further reported that wittingly or unwittingly he hastened her departure to her native land and city.

In personal appearance Henrietta was rather fragile looking, with a delicate, oval face, a brow of snow, fluffy, cinnamon-colored hair, large, childlike eyes of violet hue, a nose rather long though delicately cut, and a finely turned arm and foot.

Upon arriving home it did not take her long to discover that the man to whom she had given her heart was apparently devoted to Rae Raymond, a formidable rival; to add to the complication, she and Rae had been intimate friends from her earliest recollections, and she well knew that Rae was splendid enough to turn any man's head.

It was a terrible battle that love and friendship fought in the heart of this young and beautiful woman; and, considering the arbitrary, monopolizing nature of love, friendship held her own remarkably well.

The upshot of all Retta's sleepless vigils was that she made up her mind to spend a night with Rae, and frankly talk the situation over with her.

Henrietta wondered over and over again if dear Rae could be as much in love with Sidney

as she herself was. Alas for both, if this was the case! To poor Retta he was exquisite, her ideal of perfection, flesh and blood it is true, but the work had been so cunningly done, and art had so assisted nature, that she was sure Sidney was the wonder and despair of all who knew him. Still such was her friendship for Rae, that she determined to return to Europe if she became convinced that Rae, too, worshipped Sidney Gordon.

Accordingly one evening when they were both included in a box party at the theatre, Henrietta confided to her bosom friend that she meant to stay all night at her home if she were not too busy to receive her.

"I am never too busy to see you, Retta," was Rae's prompt response given in her most affectionate tones.

It was not until Rae's maid had left them, and the girls, in loose wrappers, were seated before the grate fire, that Retta threw her pretty arm around Rae and said suddenly:

"Rae, do you care very much for Sidney Gordon?"

"Why,—yes, I care a great deal for him," candidly admitted Rae, feeling at the same time a sinking sensation at her heart, which warned her of something startling to come.

"I am so sorry," said Retta, with an ardent

pressure of the arm about Rae, at the same time cuddling up closer.

"Why, sorry? Are you in love with him too?" asked Rae, wonderingly.

"Yes, dear Rae, before you were, I am sure. But while I love him deeply, while he is everything to me, I think I could surrender in your favor if I thought he was good enough for you."

"Good enough for me! Why, I'm no saint!" Rae laughed lightly at the idea.

"Though you are the best person I ever knew, I should have said he was not strong enough. You are what is called the new woman, and should have a new man for a husband, one who is willing a woman should have wide-awake brains of her own and the right to use them. You have as well a charming presence and a devoted heart. Now Sidney while being perfect of his kind is really an old-fashioned man, belongs to the old order of masculinity. It would be a dreadful match for you, Rae, and for Sidney."

"Ah, you think I shall develop into a new sort of Xantippe, with a fiery tongue and a will and a mind of my own, eh?"

"There is no telling what you might develop into if you married the wrong man, Rae. You would get awfully irritated, and, if it was Sid-

ney you would make life a fearful burden for him. And you might find it too terrible to endure yourself, you are so high-strung."

"Ah well, one could not tell, but Sidney would never develop into a philosophic, penniless tramp like Socrates. I could not imagine Sidney otherwise than perfectly arrayed like the lilies that 'toil not neither do they spin,'" quoted Rae, in an amused manner. "In one respect, though, he reminds me of Socrates, that is, he is a delightful conversationalist."

"Yes, he talks well, yet he lacks the solidity of thought which you possess, and you will presently tire of his delightful periods and ball-room elegance. A great gulf of hopelessness and wretchedness will then yawn between you, and you will find yourselves getting farther apart every day."

"What a seer you are becoming," said Rae, lightly. "Whence this wisdom? you frighten me!"

"Love makes me far-sighted, love and friendship combined, dear."

"Well, but if this exquisite barbarian is not good enough for me, he is certainly not good enough for you. You are the dearest little Cinderella in the world."

At this point of their conversation, Rae gave Retta one of her immense hugs and followed it

up with three or four kisses on the soft cheek of her companion, who exclaimed :

“O, I am not a woman with any ideas or aims. I shall always love Sidney with entire devotion and be to him any sort of slave he desires, society or domestic, or what not. He just suits me. There’s no man in the world for me but just Sidney Gordon ; and I have seen lots of men and had many proposals. But,—Rae, if you are bound to marry him I will leave the field to you and go back to Europe. He likes you best now,—still, with a man like Sidney that does not count for much.”

“Yes, he does seem to like me,” meditatively replied Rae. Indeed Sidney had tried in his charming way to propose to Rae that evening, but she had not felt entirely ready to respond, and had consequently parried his approaches in a joking manner.

“I am sure though, I could win him if I tried. He was all devotion to me in Europe before he met you.”

“What is that you say ?” asked Rae, surprised.

“Well, dearest, don’t be shocked. Sidney must marry an heiress. You know that he spends large sums of money in various ways. He has already made a big hole in the fortune left him by an uncle. His father has all he can

do to keep up these hard times with an extravagant family to provide for. There is a rumor in circulation that he is already hard pressed, and that Sidney is to wed you to put things on a firmer financial basis."

Rae felt herself suddenly becoming very cold. She wondered if Retta noticed how chilled was the hand which affectionately held her own. Yet she dared not withdraw it lest she should call Retta's attention more particularly to herself. There was a pause before Rae could reply in a steady matter-of-fact way.

"And you think I ought to refuse him should he make a proposal of marriage?"

"That is good!" responded Retta, fervently.

"What is good?"

"Why, the fact that Sidney has not yet proposed to you, and that you are still unpledged. I know you so well, Rae. I was afraid that you had already given your promise true, to wed him; in that case I am sure nothing on the earth about us, or in the heavens above us, would make you break it. You are too conscientious in that respect. One of these days you will bitterly rue that characteristic, so terribly pronounced in you."

"Heaven protect me! What a prophetess of woe you have become!" Rae ejaculated with a lightness she did not feel.

"I know I am right in thus warning you. If you were infallible it would be right for you to make a point of always keeping your word, no matter how threatening the consequences. We are, as Ingersoll truly says, only fragments, and our knowledge is so limited, our vision so circumscribed, that with more light we often find ourselves mistaken, and realize that the promise made, really ought never to have been made, and, having been unwisely made ought to be broken. It is but saying we are wiser to-day than yesterday."

"We will not argue on that point to-night, my pet, for I want you to tell me what to do about Sidney, now you know that I am not engaged to marry him."

"You need do nothing, Rae. It is for me to act, to regain, if possible, my lost place in his affections. You have bewitched him. I do not wonder at it, Rae, for you are a bewitching creature upon whom every goddess seems to have set her seal. I wish I had your queenly bearing, that my head was set on my shoulders in the way which gives you such an imperious, majestic air. I could hope then to be to Sidney all I desire."

"Never mind about the queenly bearing you are pleased to ascribe to me, you with the form of a beautiful fairy, a brow as pure and chaste

as the petal of a daisy, and a heart as tender as love itself, you are the one that a man would really love as a wife. You will be the true wife according to that most wonderful of French novelists, Balzac, who says, you know, that 'the true wife in heart, and in flesh, and bones will let herself be drawn hither and thither where he goes who is her life, her strength, her glory, her happiness.' 'Superior men,' he affirms, 'need women of oriental natures, whose sole thought is the study of their needs; to whom a discord between their ideas and the means of satisfying them is suffering.'"

Retta looked at her friend attentively, asking:

"Did Balzac really express those sentiments?"

"Certainly, and Zola holds much the same, —likewise the rest of men."

"I thought that was true of the old sort of wife that men no longer care for."

"That is where you are mistaken. When it comes to a wife, men at heart, I imagine, are still autocrats. They like, of course, to talk and flirt with a young woman of tact and wit, even cleverness, still, when they want wives they seek those women they believe will find their happiness in obedience and in docility, as of old."

"Then you think I will succeed in winning Sidney's affections as well as his hand?" asked Retta, thoughtfully, "yet, I don't see, if I am the kind of woman men really like as wives, why Sidney should have become lukewarm in his attentions to me and so much interested in you. You see I can not help always watching him, he is so much to me."

"That is easily explained," responded Rae, who, not being particularly egotistical, readily persuaded herself that Sidney had not really cared for her, and almost mechanically she put her thoughts into words, "I was a novelty, a new woman. The new women are not so ready for marriage as the old. They are harder to catch, being of a more independent disposition, and in love with freedom. Doubtless Sidney did not care for me, only wanted to see what I was like. Then he likes to talk. We are always sparring. We have had many a charming chat together."

Unknown to Rae her last words were tinged with sadness, which made Retta feel more than ever convinced that there was a warm feeling between Rae and Sidney. She said hurriedly:

"I don't feel sure that I can win him. I have told you there is a report about that Sidney is in need of money, and that he is going to

wed you to put himself on a firmer financial footing. You know his habits are very extravagant. Such young men are necessarily very dependent upon money and think they must have it, lots of it. I have really more money than people think because my guardian has always had a horror of my being married to a fortune-hunter, and, in consequence, has somewhat misrepresented my financial affairs."

"Then I suppose as a first move, you will see to it that Sidney is correctly informed as to your possessions?"

"Yes, and at the same time, I think it would be a good idea to make him a bit uneasy about your financial outlook. All's fair in love and war, you know."

Retta laughed a little awkwardly, for she knew her friend well enough to know, in so far as misrepresentation was concerned, that Rae would differ with her.

"Hardly, but my agent did make rather a bad investment for me the other day. You can make the most of that fact."

"Oh, I am so glad, for I do like to tell the truth, or at least have it for a basis. It is so much safer. You never know when a lie will trip you up. Now, that we have settled this worry about Sidney I want to try for some sleep. I don't think I have had a good night's

rest for a month. I must look fresh if possible.
Sidney is so particular about appearances.
Good-night, dearest Rae."

"Good-night, dear Retta."

THREE

“When the wooing of a mate was done with a club it was naturally monopolized by the sex of muscle.”

THE campaign of action planned by the two belles was very simple, particularly so for Rae, who was to leave the city for a few weeks with her mother on a visit to some relatives in the South. Meanwhile Henrietta was to use her best efforts to win the hand of Sidney Gordon.

“And you are sure that you will not be offended with me if I succeed in my purpose, dearest Rae?”

The girls were in the act of parting as Retta made this observation. In a moment she would enter her carriage which was in waiting, and be whirled to a more fashionable part of the city where her guardian dwelt in a palatial mansion.

“Surely not, you little puss. If Sidney proves to be the man you take him to be, I shall always be indebted to you. I can’t understand though why you want to wed a mercenary wretch.”

“Rae, dear Rae! please don’t speak of my handsome elegant Sidney as a mercenary wretch. That is too bad an appellation for a man born and bred to money as a duck to water. But I must not stop to talk. God bless you, Rae! You were always a genuine friend.”

The girls kissed each other just a little sadly, then Henrietta got into the carriage, waving an adieu to Rae until borne out of sight.

Henrietta did not at once go home, having made up her mind as she sped along to be dropped for a moment at the counting-room of an old and trusted employee of her father’s whom she called “Uncle Jack.”

This gentleman when summoned, came promptly to her and was greeted by Retta in her prettiest, most confidential manner.

“Uncle Jack,” she said, after being assured that he was in his usual health, “you are to help me win a husband, do you understand?”

“Nothing easier, I should say,” he replied, with a twinkle in his kindly hazel eye. Then he added, with a little hesitation, “I hope you have not had the bad taste to fall in love with a married man, otherwise I can’t imagine your needing any help.”

“Not so bad as that, Uncle Jack, though doubtless you will hardly approve of my choice

—you who like common drudgery so well and care so little for fashion or fortune. I will be frank enough and admit that the man I love is not a coarse, greedy fortune-hunter, but a refined, elegant one. I mean Sidney Gordon.”

“Sidney Gordon! H’m. . . . As the world goes Sidney is not so bad. The man is a gentleman in the old literal sense of the word, that is ‘finé,’ ‘handsome.’ He has some brains, a fair heart organ, good education, and is a thoroughly agreeable person. Spends money freely,—you will need to be on your guard,—in that respect. I should think one of your smiles would bring any man to your feet.”

Uncle Jack smiled affectionately and proudly upon Retta, patting her gently on the shoulder as he spoke the last words. They were standing, Henrietta was too much excited to notice the offered chair.

“I would like you to see that Sidney has correct information regarding my fortune. Please play the part of diplomat in the matter. Sidney must not guess that I know anything of it. I do not wish him to suspect that I think him in the least mercenary. That would hurt his self-respect.”

“I understand, and you can depend upon my finesse in the matter.”

Having thus spoken Uncle Jack and Henri-

etta exchanged significant glances and parted with a quick though hearty hand-shake.

Retta hurried to her carriage, saying to the footman as she placed her foot on the step:

“Tell James to drive home at once.”

Of late Henrietta had felt but a languid interest in her preparations for the various balls, theatres, concerts and parties which she had attended. She was carrying on a conflict in her mind as to what she ought to do, now that she had discovered Sidney's attentions to her most intimate friend, Rae Raymond. Belonging by nature to the old order of women, whose first and only law of nature is self-sacrifice, she was on the point for some time of returning to the continent. Unknown to herself, however, there was entering her mind some of the influences which help to mould the new woman, and she was beginning to do a little thinking in her own behalf, to see things from a standpoint somewhat different from the old conventional one; especially on that most interesting and vital subject, marriage. It was impossible not to read more or less concerning it since everywhere in paper, magazine, or book she saw observations concerning it; everywhere, too, her eye was caught by the ruthless revelations of divorce scandals which she could not read without drawing inferences in regard to the con-

duct of the principal parties. It dawned upon her that while Sidney and Rae were capable of being piquant friends and enjoying snatches of social comradeship they were incompatible as to character, and likely, if wed, to develop antagonistic qualities that, in time, would make them hate each other. The delight in gilded halls of pleasures, in ravishing toilettes, in the keeping step to entrancing music, in bright repartée, in club life, in short the life of a butterfly banqueting from day to day on sweets was only a passing phase of Rae Raymond's life. To Sidney, bred as he had been to luxury, and whose nature had become that of an exotic, this life meant his real vocation to be continued till physical exhaustion should make it impossible.

No sooner had she reached the conclusion that these two, so dear to her and so attached to each other in the present, were not adapted for lifelong partnership, than her mind was made up; and, at the same time she felt herself a new creature. The blood flowed freely in her veins once more, and the fleeting delicate color came back to her transparent complexion, the sweet affectionate glance was in her violet eyes again. When James left her at the front steps, she ran lightly up them, and upon the door being opened, she bounded into the house

and greeted the family in her liveliest manner. Even before her wraps were laid aside she said to Mrs. Parker:

“Auntie, you must loan me all of your diamonds to-night, for I want fairly to blaze in precious gems at what promises to be the ball of the season.”

“Of course you can wear them,” replied the good-natured, indulgent elderly woman, looking up from her paper, “only be sure that Jerry is there to watch them.”

“Agreed. Come, Annette, we will go upstairs; I want to try on the last two costumes from Worth’s. Some alterations may be required, you know I am thinner than when fitted in Paris.”

It proved a busy day for Henrietta, and also, for Annette, the deft French maid, so busy that the hour was late when the “diamond queen,” as Retta was called that evening, took her place in a scene of bewildering beauty and dazzling splendor.

The large, elegant ballroom had been prepared for the fête with an eye to effect, wholly regardless of expense or labor. Masses of roses and lilies were everywhere intermingled with graceful foliage. From the tops of the great mirrors, suspended by pale satin ribbon, hung cornucopias filled with white lilies and their

great glossy leaves. The military band, which alternated with an exceptionally fine orchestra in discoursing sweet music was almost hidden behind romantic-looking leafy bowers. Festoons of pale pink, blue and white bunting with artistically arranged colored electric lights, made an effective ceiling, and at either end of the room, great silk flags, each color of which was brought out by incandescent lamps, added to the barbaric splendor of the scene. Also, the smaller rooms and deliciously cosy retreats for flirting were gracefully bedecked with flowers and flags. By no means the least decorative part of this fine ball were the rich variegated gowns of the ladies, together with the brilliant uniforms of the military men.

Among the most striking toilettes of the evening was that of the diamond queen, lovely Retta Spofford. Her dress was a delicate combination of a dainty pale shade of blue satin and point lace, into the web of which diamonds had been woven. Nothing like this rich, be-gemmed point lace had been seen before, and the attention of the ladies was concentrated upon so startling and dazzling an innovation. Henrietta wore her aunt's wonderful diamond necklace on her slender throat, and her own sunburst in the rich bodice. In her fluffy hair above her forehead blazed a glittering diamond

star. Her fair, shapely arms were encased in delicate diamond bracelets, while in her pretty pink ears diamonds flashed defiance to the wonderful necklace. All these flashing gems made her look as if she had but just stepped from under a California rosebush sparkling with sun-filled dew, and which a slight jar had transferred, sunlight and all, to her beautiful self.

When Henrietta entered the ballroom, almost the first person her eyes fell upon was Sidney Gordon engaged in dancing with Mrs. Mayhew. They were a striking-looking couple, their types of beauty being as diverse as possible. Sidney had that sort of beauty which Rosetti loved to paint; that is, coppery golden hair, red lips and clear, delicately tinted flesh. He wore his hair parted in the middle, his brow being fine with somewhat arched eyebrows. Fine likewise, was the lower part of his face with its aristocratic nose, autumn-brown eyes, jaunty mustache and well moulded, though not strong chin. His form was taller and rather broader than that of average masculinity, and already hinted of portliness with added years.

What made Sidney,—more than anything else,—a much sought after and popular man in society was the phenomenal ease and grace of his manner; then too, he was a thoroughbred in his treatment of women, and really appeared

to hold the fair sex in high esteem. He was also a good dresser of the Beau Brummel class rather than that of the Sir Fopling F. Flutter or Fielding school. Like Brummel he exercised correct taste in the selection of his apparel, demanding that each article in form and color should harmonize with the rest of his costume; thus producing a perfect effect of general elegance.

In a way Sidney was unselfish, a characteristic which added to his popularity. Of him, it could never be said as has been done of certain London beaux that "they came late direct from their clubs with their clothing filled with the aroma of tobacco smoke; swaggering about as if their presence was a favor and nothing more was to be expected from them than to talk loudly on the staircase, eat a great deal of supper, dance as few dances as possible, and take care of no one but themselves."

Sidney invariably came in good season, bearing with him something of the delicate aroma and freshness of the morning; he spoke in low, clear cut tones, and seemed never to think of himself any more than a bodiless ministering spirit is supposed to dwell on its own happiness.

He was a master likewise in that sort of come-and-go conversation which is the only

kind admissible in the ballroom, and never was he guilty of harmful flirting, of saying things with his eyes which he would not bring his lips to utter. On the other hand, he talked with the utmost freedom and dash as if without the slightest fear of being asked his intentions; his taste in conversation was as sure and perfect as his taste in dress and deportment. Of course, the fact that ballroom talk cannot with propriety dive very deeply into the sea of thought was in his favor, deep, close thinking and painfully exact speech not being in his line.

While Sidney appeared to dance with his usual grace and spirit, and to give due attention to the festivities of the evening, Retta was sure she detected something like disappointment in his countenance, and noted that he was not quite as attentive to his partner as was customary with him. More than once she saw him glancing covertly about the room as if seeking something.

"Ah," thought Retta to herself, "society must have its martyrs as well as religion, patriotism, art, science, love. To be a devotée at that shrine Sidney will, I am sure, sacrifice his love for Rae Raymond. I only hope I can render his martyrdom bearable, even pleasant after a time. With me courtship and early married life will be trying. With her it would

be the reverse, intoxicating happiness at first followed by disillusion, aversion, perhaps contempt. But I must win his hand for a dance, or secure his attention for a little talk. He must know without delay that Rae has left the city and that her fortune is,—well, not what it was,”—acting upon her determination, Retta soon contrived to place herself where Sidney could not avoid coming to speak to her.

However it seemed an age to the little diamond queen before Sidney Gordon approached her, and after some conventional remarks asked in his courtly manner:

“Are you engaged for the next dance? It is a waltz, I believe.”

With a happily beating heart Retta replied, “I came late and am comparatively free from engagements.”

This reply was strictly true in both particulars, and Sidney never guessed the skilful maneuvers made by the fair diplomat in order to be sure of being able to dance with him when opportunity offered.

“Ah, then I may have the pleasure of being your next partner, may I not?”

“Certainly.”

The dance that followed was a dream of bliss to Retta. To be borne through the inspiring measures of a ravishing waltz by the arms of

the man she idolized, who was at the same time a perfect dancer, her ears filled with low, throbbing, delicious music, it was transport most divine. The only drawback to Retta's complete happiness was the thought, that with their flying feet flew time as well. This dream of bliss could not last always, and she must not forget business in the midst of pleasure.

With something of an effort, therefore, she asked presently :

"Have you not missed Rae Raymond to-night?"

"Yes," very quietly responded Sidney. Then just a shade more rapidly, "She is not ill, I hope?"

"No, not really ill. Her agent has been mismanaging her affairs—losing money for her, and both she and her mother have left the city for the South."

"Indeed!" Sidney dared say no more. He was intensely surprised and bitterly disappointed. He feared to betray emotion.

"I am miserably lonesome, now that she is quite gone. I scarcely know what to do with myself. Can you run up and help me forget for a time my cruel loss? You are almost, if not quite, as good company as Rae."

"Thank you. I shall be only too happy to call and try my hand at playing the rôle of

your dearest friend in her absence. When may I come ? ”

“ Oh,—suppose you come to-night,—since we have begun the new day together. It is now just past midnight.”

“ I shall be most happy.”

FOUR

Is there any good reason why the male sex should *continue* to monopolize the delicate art of proposing?

THE morning light was creeping into Sidney Gordon's elegant apartments before that gentleman chose to stop pacing back and forth and seek some much needed rest. He had returned from the ball in a mood of fierce rebellion, strongly tempted to take his life, and so end complications which made the future look dark, turn which way he would.

There was his father using his utmost endeavor to keep afloat on the present boisterous financial sea. Wreckage there meant social ruin for his proud aristocratic mother and five sisters. Then there was his own fortune already undermined by heavy interest-bearing loans; it was only a matter of time when ruin should stare him in the face, unless succor came from some quarter. And, finally, to cap all, it appeared that the woman whom he loved tenderly, was also in financial straits; for surely she would not have left the city so suddenly, without a word of parting to her friends, to

him, who had been her devoted attendant upon so many happy occasions, unless something very serious had occurred. A large portion of her fortune Sidney knew, or thought he knew, was invested in South Carolina, and thither in posthaste had gone both Rae and her mother.

“If only I had been bred to economy instead of lavish luxury, to healthful thrift instead of demoralizing sloth, and could make money as well as spend it, I might be able to find my way out of this tangle, without selling myself to the highest bidder. . . . But, alas, I am too old a dog to learn new tricks, thirty-five to-morrow, and steeped in bad habits with muscles permanently relaxed. I am a thriftless tramp, a slave! and a slave’s part I must play to the bitter end!”

Thus soliloquizing Sidney in nervous haste poured a sleeping potion down his throat, turned off the gas and sought such oblivion and rest as was to be obtained by the aid of a powerful narcotic.

It was noon when Sidney awoke to full consciousness, that is, to know that he was ill, too ill to rise. His valet came in answer to his ring and was sent presently for a doctor. The good old family physician who had tended the Gordons since Sidney could well remember, and knew their ailments like a book, was in his

office and came promptly. Soon the young man was in a more comfortable condition. He advised Sidney, however, to keep his bed for a few days, take the medicine as prescribed, when doubtless he would be all right again.

Part of this advice was strictly followed—that relating to the taking of the medicine. The rest was broken that same evening, when Sidney arose from his bed and by the aid of his faithful attendant made an elaborate and exquisite toilette.

Reuben, the coachman, with the high-stepping, well-matched greys, next took him in hand, and after some minutes of swift trotting left him in charge of the delighted and surprised Henrietta; surprised because the hour was so late that she had quite given him up. Indeed she was sure he was ill, very ill, since he had failed to send her word of his inability to keep his appointment.

She was in the drawing-room, playing whist, when Sidney appeared. Henrietta did not care much for the game, but was playing to make up the set. She could not well avoid doing so as an old friend of the family, a passionate lover of the game, had run in for an hour or so, and naturally the game was in order. As it was well on toward completion, Sidney insisted on Henrietta's keeping her seat and seeing it to a

finish. He declared himself only too happy in being able to watch its progress.

At its close some cheerful chat followed upon the topics of the day, when the group of whist players gradually dispersed,—her guardian left to attend to some business matter, the old friend went to his hotel, and Mrs. Parker, to her room with a headache. As the door shut upon the exit of the last whist player, Retta exclaimed:

“Come with me, please, to the music-room. It is so lonely in this great, gloomy drawing-room.”

Henrietta had a horror of gloomy houses and rooms, no matter what sums their sombre richness cost; and when the palatial residence of her guardian was in construction she made a special plea that the music-room should not be too big. A large room, she declared, could never be cosy and homelike.

Accordingly the music-room, which in reality was her favorite downstairs sitting-room, was not larger than an ordinary parlor. Sidney had never entered this room before, and no sooner did he stand upon its threshold than he exclaimed in pleased surprise:

“Ah, a fairy scene!”

“Do you think so?” replied Retta, a flush of pleasure mantling her cheek.

It was indeed a fairylike apartment in which

chaste elegance was wedded to cosiness and comfort. There were but three colors used in its decoration; creamy white, pale blue, and fine gold. The walls, furniture and border of the floor about the rug had been finished most artistically in creamy white and gold tints; the exquisite ceiling in delicate blue with cupids blowing horns. What gave an especial air of cosiness to the apartment was the roomy grate filled with glowing coals, on either side of which were pretty shelves of books, quite near to one's hand as one sat in a reposeful easy chair by the cheerful fire. Study lamps, with beautifully designed shades, were used in preference to the more modern electric lights, as being conducive to an old-fashioned home atmosphere and feeling. Pictures of domestic life and love, as well as one or two of art life, by famous artists, hung upon the walls. A grand piano had been refused admittance, and an upright substituted, because Retta was determined that music should not be too prominent a feature in this snugger. Besides the piano there was an old Cremona violin, a guitar, a banjo, a flute and a mandolin for the lovers of those instruments. Retta, however, confined her own musical acquisition to the piano and to vocal culture.

While Sidney looked pale with dark rings clearly distinguishable about his soft brown

eyes, Retta had never looked fresher, or more graceful and beautiful than when she seated herself near him by the glowing fireplace.

Her dress of ivory white satin was princess in style, having a Watteau pleat in the back and a demi-train. The neck was cut square in front and back and trimmed with duchess lace and pearl embroidery. She wore pearl jewelry with the exception of the tiny gold comb surmounting a saucy pug into which her back hair had been arranged. A mass of fluffy frizzes framed her forehead bewitchingly.

"By the way," began Sidney, after some desultory talk, suddenly transferring his glance from the enticing red coals, which occasionally tossed up a flickering jet of flame, to Retta's fair face, "Some one was telling me yesterday that you sang most beautifully. If that is true, why do we not hear you? Why hide your light under a bushel?"

From this remark Henrietta was sure Uncle Jack had begun his diplomatic mission.

"Oh, I do not sing, excepting here, as a rule, for two good and sufficient reasons."

"And what are the reasons?" interrogated Sidney.

"Lack of courage, one; lack of voice, two. The first would be sufficient to deter me from singing before strangers; the second prevents

any attempt on my part to sing in a large room."

"Allow me to conduct you to the piano since neither of your reasons holds good this evening. We have known each other a long time, and the room is not large."

Thus speaking Sidney rose and offered his arm to Retta, who felt that she could not do otherwise than accede to his wishes.

It was quite true that Henrietta's voice was neither splendid nor powerful, but instead, a moderately full, lovely soprano of a melodious, tender quality. It had been trained by the best teachers money could procure, Francesco Cortesi himself having been one of Retta's teachers. Each tone was perfectly placed and tenderly sweet,—enchantingly so when she sang her favorite arias and love ballads. To-night she chose to sing for Sidney that German gem entitled "Liebesfreude" (Love's joy).

Translated the song runs as follows—though the words divorced from the love-intoxicating music, are but a faint reflection of the original :

"Ah! naught in this life will compare,
Nor rank, nor gold, nor jewels rare,
'Tis love fills every part—
Ardent hopes, timid fears,
Reign by turns, and I shed happy tears,
All is joy, all is bliss,
Oh! there's naught in this life like this."

Retta sang with a rapturous abandonment, as became a passionate love song; but having finished it she paid but little heed to Sidney's eloquent words of praise. She sank into the nearest chair, breathing quickly and with eyes rapidly filling with tears. She could keep up no longer. Her wayward strength and playful spirit of bravado now deserted her. In her helplessness she cast one appealing look at Sidney. Oh, the look of a woman whose heart is filled with tender, uncontrollable love!

Sidney was at her side in an instant. He caught both her slender, delicate hands in his, and with eyes eagerly searching hers, murmured:

"Can it be possible, dear Retta, that you care for me, that I am so fortunate as to have won your priceless love?"

FIVE

“The ambition and avarice of the clergy in the Middle Ages, laid the rest of the world under contribution in the business of Marriage, made it a sacrament, obscured the real essence and nature of it, and wrested it out of the hands of the civil power, as the outward and public recognition of it, to secure it to themselves ; after which a man and woman could not marry but for the emolument of the Church. A newly married couple were not suffered to live together for a given time, unless they paid the Church for a dispensation. A man was not allowed Christian burial unless he bequeathed something to the Church. In short, a man could neither come into the world, continue in it, nor go out of it, without being laid under contribution by the clergy.”

—*Alexander's History of Women, Vol. I.*

RAE RAYMOND had one excellent trait of character, which, judging by the fiction of the day, was not common to girls who have been disappointed in love. She had learned to mask her emotions. No one guessed, not even her mother, that Sidney's proposal to Retta, following immediately upon her own departure from the city had given her the keenest pain her life had ever known.

Still, while she seemed outwardly the same, except perhaps a little more subdued and sym-

pathetic in her everyday intercourse with people, this love experience, nipped in the bud, was a turning point in her life. She returned to Chicago with her mother, determined to end her career as a society belle, arrange her financial affairs for a long leave of absence, see the world, and then settle down to some useful kind of work.

Mrs. Raymond was delighted with Rae's program, and readily agreed to spend the next two years abroad, thinking "when we return I shall build the cosy girl-bachelor home and we will begin new careers for ourselves."

Scarcely, however, had they returned from their southern trip than Retta came with flying feet and exuberant kisses to announce the approaching great society event, that of her marriage to Sidney Gordon.

"And you will be my maid of honor, dearest Rae? I know you will since you have ever been my honorable friend."

To make sure of a "Yes," Retta seated herself on Rae's lap and hugged and kissed her until Rae laughingly assented.

"When is the happy event to take place? I just got in this morning. You know I have been out of the swim."

Rae did not, of course, reveal the fact that she had been in no mood for some time to in-

dulge in her passion for newspaper literature. She had been reading instead, most sedulously, essays by Emerson. Indeed, so constantly, during the stay in the South, by night as well as by day, had the books of the Concord sage been in her hands, that her mother now began to speak of her laughingly as a "disciple of Emerson," instead of, as formerly, "my newspaper fiend."

"Why, to-morrow, dear, to-morrow! Say yes, quick, for I must hasten home."

Rae laughed and said "yes," as quickly as any one could desire, pinching Retta's cheek at the same time.

"That's a dear. Oh, by the way, I have brought you a present. You know how we have always admired auntie's diamond necklace. Well, she has made me a bridal present of it, and I have bought for you, one as nearly like it as could be found in New York."

Retta produced from her bag as she spoke a beautiful box out of which she drew the sparkling gems.

Rae could only murmur as Retta fastened this dream of diamond splendor on her neck:

"Ah, Retta, you were always too generous, too generous!"

The wedding took place in one of the fine Episcopal churches of the city. To this church

Retta had belonged for some years, being among its most distinguished members, distinguished not so much from the fact of her wealth as on account of her charities and good works.

The wedding, one of the most beautiful of the season, was pervaded by the spirit of Easter. This could not be otherwise, since upon entering the church you were at once reminded of a field of lilies with palms waving over them. The altar rail and the choir were quite hidden by great Easter lilies, displayed against a background of tropical foliage. Garlands of lilies stretched in every available place, while on the top of each pew was a cluster fastened by bows of broad white satin ribbon.

The bridal party entered to the music of Lohengrin's march.

Retta looked very beautiful in her robe of satin de Lyons, trimmed with the rare old lace that had been worn by her mother at her own wedding. Above her exquisite veil nodded a diamond aigrette, the bridal gift of Sidney.

Rae Raymond was dressed charmingly in white over green, and carried a bouquet of white lilacs in her hand. The bridesmaids wore gowns of the same material, each of a different color.

Notwithstanding the organist played so tenderly, during the ceremony, pretty love airs,

as "Call Me Thine Own," "Believe me if all those endearing young charms," and the like, Rae gave her whole attention to the ceremony itself. Now, as lovers, when matrimonially inclined, are notoriously blind and deaf and stupid, it may not be amiss to transcribe in this place the orthodox views and vows to which Rae Raymond listened with keenest attention at the beautiful white wedding.

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God, and in the face of this company, to join together this Man and this Woman in holy Matrimony; which * * * is commended of Saint Paul to be honorable among all men: and therefore is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly; but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two persons present come now to be joined. If any man can show just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace."

The minister paused a moment, then proceeded addressing more particularly the couple to be married.

"I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye

may not be lawfully joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured that if any persons are joined together otherwise than as God's Word doth allow, their marriage is not lawful."

No impediment being alleged by any one, the minister now addressed himself to Sidney:

"Sidney, wilt thou have this Woman to thy wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou love her, comfort her, honor her and keep her in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep thee only unto her, so long as ye both shall live?"

"I will," promptly replied Sidney.

The minister then turned to Retta and said:

"Henrietta, wilt thou have this Man to thy wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance, in the holy estate of Matrimony? Wilt thou obey him, and serve him, love, honor and keep him in sickness and in health; and, forsaking all others, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?"

Retta was only too happy to make the required promise,

"I will."

The minister then asked:

"Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?"

Retta's guardian here "gave her away" in place of her father. The minister having placed Sidney's right hand in Retta's right hand, had Sidney repeat after him the following:

"I Sidney Gordon take thee Henrietta Spofford to my wedded Wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I plight thee my troth."

Sidney and Retta then loosed their hands when Retta with her right hand took Sidney by his right and repeated the following formula after the minister:

"I Henrietta Spofford take thee Sydney Gordon to my wedded Husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love, cherish and to obey, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I give thee my troth."

At this point in the ceremony Sidney placed upon the fourth finger of Retta's left hand a gold ring and repeated after the minister:

"With this Ring I thee wed, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Here followed a prayer by the minister, after which he joined Sidney's and Retta's right hands, saying solemnly :

“Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder,” then added :

“Forasmuch as Sidney Gordon and Henrietta Spofford have consented together in holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth, each to the other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving a Ring, and by joining hands ; I pronounce that they are Man and Wife : In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

The minister's blessing on the newly-made man and wife completed the ceremony.

“God the father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost bless, preserve and keep you ; the Lord mercifully with His favor look upon you, and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace ; that ye may so live together in this life, that in the world to come ye may have life everlasting. Amen.”

“How dreadful,” was Rae's feeling at the close, “to make young creatures to whom the future is a sealed volume, promise in that wholesale way ! No wonder there is, with added thoughtfulness, an increasing tendency

to single-blessedness. As for me, I would rather die than run such a risk of perjuring myself. One can only love what is lovely, honor the honorable, serve where conscience dictates; and as for pledging oneself to live with a person for the rest of your life, when you have no means of knowing whether it will be right or possible, that is criminal, conventional, servile docility! Heaven help me to walk alone through life rather than pledge myself in so heedless and benighted a fashion."

SIX

Marriage? A leap in the dark. Men and women are on their best behavior before marriage, largely because not sure of winning the other. Are they not on their worst behavior after marriage partly for the reason that they are too sure of each other?

How many people go aboard an ocean steamer, leaving the Old World for the New or the New for the Old, simply to forget, to begin life over again? Many I ween. And old ocean as if cognizant of this fact proceeds to shake these wretches, demoralize their physical basis, lay them low on tossing beds where they just manage not to turn inside out. When this process has gone on until her victims are quite sure 'tis better to fly to ills unknown than longer endure those too well experienced—ah, then come the beautiful days of convalescence! Long, sweet intervals full of a divine calm, the sky above so clear, so blue, so benign. And the ocean? Who can describe the charms of the ocean now that she smiles upon you, dances for you, coaxes you into good humor by a thousand subtle evanescent wiles? You end by falling in love with her, this charmer of old, and find yourself sighing with regret as you

leave her, even as you sighed with apprehension when first you trusted yourself to her embraces. But decidedly she has done you good. The past has been shoved back so that it no longer insistently claims the present and threatens the future. You can once more hold your own with the world as it is, and proceed to look after your baggage with a new interest concerning people and things in general.

Thus felt Rae Raymond after her ocean trip, following hard upon the marriage of her two most intimate friends, both of whom she tenderly loved.

Rae and her mother were now bent upon making the grand tour, and making it leisurely. It would therefore be quite impossible to define their trip as Phineas Fogg's "Around the World in Eighty Days," was sketched by the *Daily Telegraph*:

From London to Suez via Mont Cenis and Brindisi,	
by rail and steamboats	7 days
From Suez to Bombay, by steamer	13 "
From Bombay to Calcutta, by rail	3 "
From Calcutta to Hong Kong, by steamer . .	13 "
From Hong Kong to Yokohama (Japan) by steamer	6 "
From Yokohama to San Francisco, by steamer .	22 "
From San Francisco to New York, by rail . .	7 "
From New York to London, by steamer and rail .	9 "
<hr/>	
Total	80 days

Indeed they lingered long in some places — for instance in London, in many respects that most marvellous as well as most populous hive of human beings on the globe. Here also, they found many acquaintances who assisted in prolonging their stay in a city replete with the triumphs of their Anglo-Saxon ancestry. True, there was likewise an infusion of French blood which accounted partly for their long stop in the most brilliant and dazzling of European capitals, Paris. Rome, that mighty law-giving mother of the world was another city where these two tarried long, and finally left with a multitude of impressions which the reading of many books, or loquacity of many newspapers could never have succeeded in giving them. Then there was a sisterhood of beautiful Italian cities, among which may be especially mentioned Florence, “La bella,” Genoa, “La superba,” Milan, “La grande,” Venice, Naples, Bologna, Turin, Pisa, all full of artistic creations that consumed much of their time, and made these beholders loth to turn their backs on so much beauty, whether the handiwork of man or God. Not less difficult of curtailment as to time was their visit to the principal cities of music-steeped Germany. Indeed they listened here, by day and by night, to such exquisite tone-poems and tone-dramas so fault-

lessly performed, that Rae declared more than once she should be henceforth spoiled for music in general and her own in particular. Her feelings in this respect may be compared to those of a delightful amateur pianist, W. Beatty-Kingston, who, upon hearing Liszt, thus dramatically paints his feelings :

“After listening awe-stricken and breathless, to one of these unequalled musical utterances, marvels alike of invention and execution, the revulsion of feeling experienced by a pianist of the class above alluded to was little short of crushing, suggesting grim vows of never again laying finger on key, of advertising one’s favorite ‘grand’ for sale at an unprecedented sacrifice, and of foregoing throughout life all musical enjoyments save that derivable from a Liszt improvisation. Perhaps the most wonderful feature of his playing was his touch, plurality of touch—pianists will understand what I mean—one light as a falling snowflake on the wing of a butterfly, another as rich as Genoa velvet of triple pile, a third as clinging as a young lover’s first kiss, a fourth as hard and bright as the blow of a diamond-headed hammer. He could make the instrument, to others a machine of readily exhaustible tone-resources, do anything—sing, talk, laugh, weep, and mimic orchestral effects without number.”

Notwithstanding Germany's great musical geniuses have enriched the world with the highest achievements in the noblest of arts and made the fatherland a trysting place for lovers of the same, Rae and her mother could find no appreciation of the fact by magnificent statues of these men, such as had been reared to Prussian kings and to men noted in the art of war. Finally Rae fell to asking one and another of such Germans as crossed her path, "Why this oversight? for oversight it must be on the part of prominent individuals among you, since the common people in many ways show their love of so divine an art." The Germans thus addressed looked surprised at the query—almost as much surprised as had an employee of the great Boston library when Rae asked that individual, if Boston really had no great women—she had been led to suppose otherwise all her life! This, after she had been studying attentively the clusters of names—all those of men—in the magnificent vestibule of that famous public building, reared by taxes raised on women's property the same as on the men's.

But to return to the cogitating Germans,—from one of these Rae gleaned the following reply: "This apparent oversight is not due to the indifference of the people to their great men in art, science, literature, statesmanship,

but to the passive obedience of the masses who rarely take the initiative in any public enterprise."

Berlin, aside from its evident non-appreciation of great German civilians, was disappointing to them in other respects, doubtless partly for the reason that it has suddenly grown large and been almost rebuilt since the war with France. There were whole streets of houses all "equally high, equally broad, equally gaudy" in appearance, because the Prussian kings adored uniformity in street architecture as well as in the uniforms of their soldiers. An individualistic home was a rarity, the usual Berlin mode of existence being an apartment house shared with a dozen or more families, and subject to the petty tyranny of a porter whose duties were dangerously near those of a police officer.

"I do not wonder," exclaimed Rae to her mother, one day, "that Germany takes the lead as regards Socialism. They are naturally being prepared for it by all this sameness in domicile, in barracks, in uniforms and in passive obedience to officialism. How I dislike it all! Give me rather the grimy London fronts with their infinitely charming individualistic diversity!"

"Ah, but Rae, I heard you say you thought

some sort of collectivism in our own country would be better than the other extreme toward which we are rushing with such appalling celerity—that other extreme wherein the resources of the people are being more and more manipulated by gigantic trusts (ever becoming fewer and more gigantic) while the masses are being turned into officials, poorly paid artisans, half-starving laborers, an overworked peasantry (in place of the dignified independent farmer); added to this the evils of a fettered press, a servile lawmaking power, and a constitution not sufficiently elastic to meet the emergencies of the hour.”

“Yes, yes; but either extreme is hideous! Let us talk about something else. We are only women, with hands tied by religion, politics, science, economics, marriage! Let us eat, drink, see sights and be merry! That is better than brooding over present and threatening ills until we go insane, or make ourselves nuisances by becoming calamity-howlers. If our men would only allow our sex to be their helpmates we would assist them in finding some way to stretch our constitution to meet the new needs of our people, and to cancel interpolated clauses which work destruction to our finances and consequently to our liberties. But our men would rather go to perdition first!—in fact

are in perdition to the new divine right of millionaires' rule, almost as destructive to liberty as the old divine right of kings."

"Dear Rae, you are becoming intemperate in speech—so like your dear father in his editorials during the war. But you are a woman, dear; it is less excusable in you than in him. I was patient before you, and my mother before me, and so on away back as far as history gives us any account, women have been patient, bearing their fates and asking little for themselves. But take heart! to-day we are not bought or sold, shut up in harems or even seriously looked down upon except by some of the professors in the great colleges, who write down our intellectual status with particular eagerness after they have fought to keep woman out."

Naturally a young woman like Rae Raymond, healthy, wealthy, handsome and cultured, with mischievous glances and sparkling repartée upon occasion, would find suitors in the Old World as in the New. To one of these suitors who would propose in spite of her ingenuity in warding off the crisis, she answered with firmness:

"You have mistaken me altogether. I am not a marrying woman."

"Not a marrying woman! I never heard of such a thing!" he exclaimed, with a look of amazement and incredulity.

Rae explained :

“It is most common nowadays to hear it remarked of a certain man, some well-preserved bachelor who has at command everything life has to offer by way of amusement, intellectual culture, social privileges (everything but heart-culture) that such a person is not a marrying man. We women are a little tardy in adopting new fashions, but sooner or later we put in an appearance in each new phase of life, Eve followed Adam, you know. Well, if I know myself, I am a non-marrying woman, a new kind of Eve.”

As in this case, the strange audacity of her remarks usually extinguished whatever spark of love had flashed out in the marriage proposal of a few moments previous. The suitor would presently leave her side, remarking to himself :

“A strange, unnatural girl that! A young woman without a woman’s heart! How dreadful! Nature thwarted! A new woman of the most frightful type. If this proves catching, men will have more reason to fear the new Eve than the old. A plague upon the sex, I say, whether its members be of the old order, or of the new! Ever a puzzle and a vexation of spirit to man.”

There was one suitor, however, that Rae did not answer with her usual audacity, though

she refused him in a positive manner every time he proposed, and that was about every thousand miles of her journey around the world. He was one of those persistent men who will not take no for an answer. Rae and he frequently discussed marriage, but could never agree. The young man asserting that the marriage rite as instituted, maintained and administered by the clergy was calculated to protect the mother and her child as they should be protected. Otherwise men would, when the wife became old and less charming, desert her for a new face and fresh attractions, a demoralizing thing for the family and for the state. Rae on the other hand contended that the so-called, much vaunted protection was only another name for subjection of woman in marital life, and that as history proved most conclusively the degradation and degeneration of subject races of men, even those who were at one time dominant, that woman under like conditions would continue to develop the pettier and meaner qualities in undue measure. Rae maintained that the time was at hand when so sacred and important a tie as marriage should cease to minister to a spirit of domination and ownership in the breast of the man, and to publicly humiliate the woman on her wedding day; and, if she were a woman of spirit, to arouse in her

an ugly feeling of resistance ; or in the opposite kind of woman to kill even the small root of independence she might possess before marriage. The twain should leave the altar with the feeling that they should be mutually loving and helpful ; that they should mutually strive to serve and bear one another's burdens ; that neither should feel that they had the right to claim domination or ownership of the other party associated in the delicate relationship of husband and wife.

These two were in the habit of paying particular attention to any new data on a theme in which they took so much interest. Newspaper literature was in the nature of things fragmentary, and presented but a meagre, sometimes distorted, view of one or two aspects of such an immense subject as the marital relations of the sexes, past and present, with guesses at future modifications. There was accordingly not a little rejoicing when Rae's persistent admirer brought in a good-sized book with many-sided, up-to-date views on the subject. True much of this same matter had appeared in newspaper form but in an English paper which only occasionally came within the range of Rae's glance. The newspaper which had generously and self-sacrificingly undertaken to discover whether or no marriage as administered is a failure, was the

English *Daily Telegraph*. The phrase "self-sacrificingly" is used advisedly since the editor is declared to have "stood firm beneath the shock of twenty-seven thousand letters," on the query, "Is marriage a failure?" To give some idea of the enormous proportions of this correspondence, Harry Quilter informs the public in the preface of the book which has undertaken to republish the cream of the correspondence—incorporating also a paper on the philosophy of marriage by Mrs. Lynn Linton, and the principal laws of marriage and divorce as instituted by Christendom—that,

"Seasons changed, summer passed away. Baldwin fell from the clouds, and Edison's voice was brought us in a box. Imperial diaries came out and were suppressed, grouse were cleared from the moors, and partridges shot in the stubble, but still with the inevitableness of fate, the regularity of time, and the persistency of a Scotch lawyer, the three columns of perplexed curates, city barmaids, observant bachelors, and glorified spinsters, maintained their hold upon the journal, and their claim on the public attention.

"At last in full tide, when it seemed that the correspondence might become as long as Albany Street, the *Daily Telegraph* closed it abruptly. No one will ever know what editorial prevision

of the claim to be made the very next day upon the public attention by the horror excited by the Whitechapel murders prompted the close of this correspondence. Suffice it, that on Saturday, September 29th, the controversy ended."

When Rae remarked to her mother after having perused many of the letters, that she had no idea there was such *general dissatisfaction* in the ranks of married people as the book would lead her to suppose, Mrs. Raymond answered with an amused smile:

"And I, Rae, am surprised, that a gentleman who has tried so hard to win your consent to be his bride should place in your hands such a telltale volume."

Rae laughed softly as she replied, "He is well aware how eager I am for all knowledge possible on a subject of such vital importance to the progress of the race. He is sufficiently familiar with Herbert Spencer to believe that the more favors we render one another the more surely we win each other's good will."

"Ah, yes, everything is done to secure affection before marriage."

Mrs. Raymond sighed as she went on arranging her gown before the mirror in their dressing-room, one of their rather gaudy but fine suite of rooms. Rae, who had finished an elab-

orate toilette and had thrown herself into a chair near by, was alternately reading and chatting; at any moment she expected a servant announcing her persistent admirer. Usually she knew to a minute when he would call, but to-day her watch was at a jeweller's for repairs and her mother's timepiece could not be depended upon, it being an exquisite toy rather than an article of utility.

"I had almost forgotten, but there is one letter in the first part of the book that you would enjoy immensely. I will read it to you while you curl your hair. Of course I do not accept all she says, but I think you will agree with her entirely:

"SIR:—There is a great deal being said at present about women. It seems to me that a transition period has arrived in their destiny. Mrs. Mona Caird seems to object to the marriage rite, and, as far as I can see, advocates something unworthy of womanhood. Disasters follow hasty and improvident marriages, doubtless, but a thousand times more direful would be the disasters which would follow a violation of the sacred law of marriage. Women have enough to contend with, heaven knows, under the existing state of things, but only degradation and oppression of the weaker sex," Rae

stopped, interjecting, "You see she takes it for granted that we are really the weaker sex, spiritually as well as physically," then she read on with unabated animation, "could possibly accrue were the venerable sanctuary of wedlock desecrated. I do not believe that any woman with a spark of womanliness in her could honestly uphold such a doctrine. Women are heavily weighted enough as it is in the race of life. One law is made for the man and another for the woman. Women are the weaker vessel," Rae exclaimed in disgust. "Pah! why should men be overweighted with vanity and women have so little, I wonder?" and again picking up the book as though compelled, continued, "and 'might has been right,' for long ages; but in the present day a few females are beginning to take an independent outlook, and to view matters—not as they have been taught to view them, but—as they really are. As a class women are oppressed and men are the oppressors. A writer in one of the current magazines speaks of 'Glorified Spinsters' as one of the novel productions of this age. The glorified spinster reads Spencer and Mill; she earns her own living; she dwells in rooms by herself; she lives honestly; dresses plainly; and as she is thrown on her own resources for amusement, she cultivates her intellect. It seems to me

that there does not exist on this earth a more respectable character than a woman who can stand alone and make her own way in this big, dreary world."

Rae nodded, "That is true! the way things are it is a frightful place for the poor—men or women, don't you think so, old lady?" not waiting for a reply she dipped back into the book,

"And such independent, self-reliant ones are not few in the present age. Men require an amount of excitement to make them satisfied with their daily life—drinking, betting, smoking, concert-halls and the like; but women who go their own way in the world find life tolerable and even happy with none of these. Women who look upon marriage as the end of their aims, and who fail to get a husband, are fretful, peevish, disappointed, and one feels inclined to wonder almost why they were created. But women who have taken broader views of life, and have found their work, and have done it faithfully and honestly, and continue to do it, are not unhappy. Marriage is not essential to a woman's life. There are thousands of women leading honest, independent, useful lives, who have tasted of some of the highest happiness with 'no aid from passion and no thought of love.' Life has only two ecstatic moments—

one when the soul catches a glimpse of a kindred spirit, and one when the spirit catches sight of truth. Few women can enjoy both of these, for in the light of the kindred spirit they cease to perplex themselves to seek for the light of knowledge; but the woman who has no kindred spirit to occupy her mind, may delve into things and delight her soul in discovering fresh truths. Life has its compensations: we cannot be inquiring philosophers and happy wives as well. Therefore, my sisters, let us at least be inquiring philosophers. Yours,

“A GLORIFIED SPINSTER.”

Rae finished with an expression eloquent of dissent.

“That is excellent, I am sure,” returned Mrs. Raymond, when Rae had finished. “The book is not so bad after all, but what can there be in this letter excepting her trite reference to her own sex as the weaker vessel to which you cannot fully subscribe?”

“More particularly the latter part — ‘We cannot be inquiring philosophers and happy wives as well.’ Why should it be any more impossible for women to be both inquiring philosophers and happy wives than for men to be both inquiring philosophers and happy husbands? I cannot see except that women have

to bear children and be in subjection to their—domestic duties.”

“While women are caring for their children, men have the living to make and to be in subjection to business requirements.”

“And in addition to their home duties, women are obliged to be in subjection to their husbands who would soon put a stop to their being inquiring philosophers.” There was a pause; as Mrs. Raymond made no comment, Rae added with decision:

“But that is wholly unnecessary and should be firmly resisted by the wives.”

Mrs. Raymond actually laughed, something unusual for her who had been bred to suppress anything like demonstrative emotion or exuberance in conduct. Then she said as she held the iron wrapped in a lock of hair,

“I imagine the fate of these resisting wives would be much like that of Vashti. The men would combine now, as then, to arrange the suppression of any such independence to marital authority.”

“Do you really think so, mother? remember times are changed even since your day. Woman has a thousand privileges now, undreamed of in your time. Besides, I do not understand how either men or women can be successful inquiring philosophers unless they have the advantage

of viewing life from the standpoint of married life with its multitudinous experiences as well as from the standpoint of single life. The most successful inquiring philosopher I know of was Emerson who was twice happily married. If he had been happily married once, and the other time unhappily he might have been still more successful—but I am sure he saw enough facets of truth for any one mortal. The three most successful inquiring woman philosophers of the past were, I think, George Eliot, George Sand and Madame de Staël, all of whom had the advantage of viewing life from both the single and double standpoint. Even celibate, inquiring men-philosophers seem to come short as compared with their married brothers.”

“I am afraid you are beginning to fall in love with that persistent lover of yours, Rae,” said the mother, anxiously, at the same time giving Rae a scrutinizing glance.

Before Rae could make answer, a neat German maid came in and handed a card to Rae, who, after looking at it smiled back at her mother, and said :

“Very well, Gretchen, tell him I will be there in a moment.”

SEVEN

"I do not call to mind a single human being who has steadily denied the authority of the laws on the simple ground of his own moral nature."

—*Emerson.*

Our marriage and divorce laws are a mass of anomalies.

IN the greeting of Rae Raymond and her expected caller there was nothing that would indicate they were in love with each other unless it was the fact that the gentleman held the lady's hand in his a trifle longer than was necessary or usual, and inquired after the health of her mother with more than ordinary solicitude.

It was evening, the room was brilliantly lighted, and there were flowers in the beautiful vases which Rae had selected and brought from Italy. The fine piano was open, and near it was a violin on a centre table. The furniture of the room was rich but not so suggestive of ease and sociability as that manufactured in America. Rae was attired in a heliotrope oriental satin gown trimmed in spotted chiffon of the same shade and delicate shimmering beaded work of

charming design. She wore an antique necklace, picked up in Italy, and diamond earrings consisting of single stones. Her abundant, dark glossy hair was done in a massive but compactly braided coil at the back of her head; the front was waved back with the exception of a lock or two curled on the forehead, which rendered her brow more feminine in appearance than would have been the case if her hair had been severely drawn back.

Her companion's clothes were not remarkable in any way, though doubtless if Rae Raymond had undertaken to describe them, she would have ended—or begun—by saying they were a remarkably poor fit. But, while Rae set a high value on appearances, she was far from the opinion that clothes make the man.

After these two had chatted awhile on general topics, the young man asked,

“What do you think of the book, ‘Is Marriage a Failure?’ or rather, I would ask what effect has the reading of it had upon you?”

“Judging by all this new English testimony I am more than ever convinced that marriage and divorce as administered to-day by the various Christian nations present a perfect mass of anomalies and absurdities.”

“Yes, rather puzzling, in some ways. The sailor who was married and divorced in America

but found upon returning to England that English law recognized his marriage but not his divorce, was in a perplexing situation. Notwithstanding this it appears to be quite possible in Great Britain for a man to have two wives, one of whom is his lawful wife in England, the other in Scotland. Again in certain of England's colonies marriage with a deceased wife's sister is legal; but if a domiciled Englishman takes a trip to one of these colonies, marries his deceased wife's sister and brings her home, he finds his marriage invalid. Also, it appears that while England permits the use of a multitude of religious ceremonies by the various religious sects, yet if these are not performed in a registered building in the presence of a registrar, not the presence of a whole bench of bishops can constitute the ceremony a legal marriage; hence many sad mistakes."

"Pardon me, do you not mean many happy escapes?" asked Rae. "But you did not mention into what a series of complications a man could put himself by attempting to have a legal wife both in England and Scotland. For instance, we will say he is English, lives in London, and marries a country woman. They go to Scotland where he misconducts himself so seriously that she procures a divorce. Her husband marries again, returns to England where he can

be prosecuted for bigamy, the divorce obtained by his first wife holding good north of the Tweed, but being invalid in England."

"Poor devil! but your laws are no better, though I have understood that there is more happiness in married life in the States than elsewhere."

"Oh, yes, I am inclined to think that is the case, now that I have lived abroad some time and given particular attention to domestic life among foreign people. But while we are free from Roman Catholic dictation in a measure, we have plenty of anomalies of our own. In no two states are the marriage and divorce laws the same. As to the matter of age, in one state a youthful couple may marry at twelve and fourteen respectively. In another their ardor would have time to cool since each would have to add a couple of years before a lawful marriage could take place; in another they would have to wait still longer—till eighteen and fifteen. But if they happened to live in Washington they would probably be off with this calf love and on with a more serious affair, for in this state the legal ages are twenty-one and eighteen. As for consent of parents, sometimes this is almost as necessary as in France; in other states as little worthy of consideration as in England. Then as to consanguinity or

affinity as a bar to marriage, there is likewise a vast difference in the various states. In Vermont a man may not marry his mother-in-law, should he wish to ; and there arise many complications if you happen to have Chinese or negro blood in your veins and attempt marriage with a white person. On one side of a river a man can marry a consort as black as he can find, while on the other side of the river negro blood to the extent of one-eighth suffices to prevent legal union ; indeed it is sometimes a penal offence for a white person to marry a negro. However, all these marriage variations of our forty and odd states are but a drop in the bucket compared to the puzzling situations a couple may encounter who are determined to untie their marital knot and have lived a sort of migratory life in several states."

"I have never paid any attention to the matter of obtaining a divorce. That does not bother me in the least," said Rae's admirer, bending toward her. "My puzzle is how to get married to the lady of my choice."

"Yes, I suppose that is the usual mode of proceeding," she lifted her eyebrows ; "before marriage to give one's attention to the business of getting married ; and after that to the business of obtaining a divorce."

"I fear you are incorrigible, Miss Raymond."

This was said with much sadness by the young man who regarded her with a serious expression of countenance.

"Why should I not be?—I find that it is a much more desperate business, this of getting married, than I had ever conceived. By the way, I made a little memorandum of a few matrimonial foxes which from the letters, appear to mar the luxuriance of the vines of wedded bliss."

Rae went to a stand upon which lay the book, "Is Marriage a Failure?" and took from it a paper. On second thoughts she returned and secured the book also, and came back to her former place. Then she said ominously,

"Prepare for ugly truths on the dark side of matrimony."

Rae's caller gave an expressive shrug of the shoulders, which caused her to laugh merrily, after which she began to read from her paper:

"Insatiable passion for betting and drinking."

"I should think one of those passions alone would be enough to destroy domestic peace, but proceed."

"Idiotic speculations repeated ad nauseum. Confirmed infidelity and neglect. The vice of laziness carried to excess and combined with the basest selfishness, cynical unkindness, downright brutality."

"I repeat, I should think any one of those causes would destroy the happiness of any couple. Why combine them?"

"I often found them so, probably for the reason that as a rule there must be two causes combined to secure absolute divorce in England—infirmity alone not being sufficient.

"Confirmed drunkenness with aggravated assaults.

"Ungovernable temper and a carping, gibing, exasperating tongue. Chronic suspicion accompanied with maddening surveillance."

"Any more little foxes?" inquired the listener, as Rae paused.

"I have only made a good beginning," she replied.

"Long penal service on the part of husband or wife.

"Frequently released gaol birds become eligible for divorce, also insufferably disputatious persons.

"Chronic acrimonious religious difference is sufficient cause.

"Concealed idiocy, revealed after marriage.

"Continual wagging of a nagging tongue."

"That last must be the most unendurable," said the patient caller, with a shrug.

"Yes, but not even in Arizona or Dakota could a man or woman obtain relief from the

continual dropping of an irritating tongue," and she continued :

"Prolonged semi-starvation due to laziness.

"Insufferable snobbishness every day in the week.

"Frequent desertion, more or less prolonged.

"Chronic diseases that menace health of offspring.

"Hypocritical attentions combined with treacherous lying.

"Frequently repeated overdose of mother-in-law.

"Incompatible temperaments.

"Broken pre-marital promises.

"Demoralizing social dissipation."

"Surely you did not find all you have been reading in that book?" interrupted the astonished caller.

"All in this book and more; though of course scattered through a mass of letters. I crystallized these various menaces to connubial bliss in a few clauses. But there are more of them."

"Well, let us have them. I am curious to hear what else there can be under the heavens to mar the happiness of two trusting creatures."

"Absorbing Platonic friendships associated with chronic 'cold shoulder' treatment of husband or wife."

"That would be hard to put up with, I'll admit," again interrupted the gentleman. "Idle, though, to dream of help or relief as things are."

"Perfectly idle, unless you do not mind blackening the characters of a dozen or so people in the course of your quest for a divorce. But there, I will not read you any more irritating causes of trouble in married life, though I have others down, incident to diseased nerves, brains, etc. These are trifles light as air in comparison with dishonest treatment of each other incident to a bad or brutal heart."

"Well, rather a discouraging list; still," he said, "with dishonest people any sort of a marriage would be a failure. I think it is just as well to tie them up tight and let them fight it out. As for good, upright people, free marriage even could not be bad."

"The trouble is many people are as bad as they dare to be," answered Rae. "Associate such a person with a fairly good companion, and he will take all the advantage which an almost indissoluble bond permits. The great reason why men and women are admirable as lovers, is because of the uncertainty of being able to win each other. If there was the same uncertainty in being able to retain each other in wedlock, these people would still be on their

good behavior. There ought to be more room for the play of that wonderful natural law of the survival of the fittest in married life."

"What! after a man or a woman has compassed heaven and earth to win a beloved person, then have it uncertain how long he can retain his prize? How cruel you would be, Miss Raymond, if you had the making of the marriage laws!"

"But how do you know that you would not be just as eager to relinquish your prize after marriage, as you were before to win?" asked Rae, "and if you were, you would regard with complacency a marriage contract that, being made legal by mutual consent and by aid of registrar, could be dissolved by the same means. Of course, where the consent was not mutual the courts would have to decide as best they could whether there was real cause for divorce, or for separation. Also, if a reasonable marriage contract has been privately drawn up, and has been violated, or rendered null and void by one of the parties, and the other desires the dissolution of the marriage in consequence—though unable to obtain the consent of the other party—the marriage should be dissolved, since the basis upon which it was made is by that wish already dissolved, and the marriage is a failure."

“Supposing, Miss Raymond, you were not obliged to solemnly swear you would love, honor or serve a man until death, but only required to live with him, would you be willing to do that?”

“One might under certain circumstances feel able to count upon doing that, I suppose, but neither church nor state has any right to compel people intending matrimony to obligate themselves so seriously. It is positively wrong at this stage of the world’s progress for either a state, or a church to insist on the making of vows which no human being can be sure of fulfilling. This practice engenders a tendency to irresponsibility as regards the making and breaking of promises. The present orthodox marriage service is bad on other accounts. Listen to this extract from one of the letters:

“‘I think the Anglican Marriage Service does a great deal of harm. It publicly humiliates a woman, makes her feel uncomfortable on her wedding day, and arouses a spirit of resistance. “Let the wife see that she reverence her husband”; can any precept be more unreasonable? If people are worthy of reverence they are revered, and not otherwise. Neither reverence nor love will come to order. The Anglican service lowers the wife and sets the husband on a pedestal not at all suitable to

him, filling him with notions of marital supremacy which are the cause of half the unhappiness of married life. What wonder that when a man hears himself described as his wife's god (" the man is the head of the woman even as Christ is the Head of the Church ") he should consider her in the light of his horse, or his dog, or anything that is his ? Why should an old bachelor like St. Paul influence our ceremonies of to-day ? ' ' "

" No reasonable man, Miss Raymond, would deny that the Anglican service is out of date ; that is, no man who is not a religious bigot. The idea of a woman of to-day being told to reverence her husband is absurd. The man knows the woman by his side is far better than himself ; if he was not perfectly aware of that fact he would never marry her. But the old landmarks are so difficult of removal. In the meantime I should like to get married. "

Rae, unheeding this observation, went on to say :

" I do not agree with those who think that marriage, as instituted by the priests of the past, from Genesis down to the peopling of the New World, is a failure. It was necessary that the world should be peopled, I suppose, but there are now more people, even in the States, than man's administration of affairs can prop-

erly provide for. So woman should now be raised to an equality with man as regards the privilege and liberty to be herself, even as man desires to be himself. Under such conditions the race would steadily improve. I hope that when woman is no longer monopolized by man, and kept in subjection, that the race of cruel monopolists of to-day will pass away and give place to a more generous, Christ-like people."

"But in this time of transition, alas, what can such poor sinners as I do who need so much a woman's tender care and furtherance? You appear to believe that it is better to live in selfish isolation. That reminds me, I have brought an antidote for you, to offset the deleterious effect of the book which I was weak enough to put into your hands because I knew that it would please you."

With a tender smile the antidote was produced from an ample pocket and placed in Rae's hand. She did not appear to notice his almost affectionate manner as she turned over the leaves of the book exclaiming:

"Oh! Philip Gilbert Hamerton is the author, a most graceful and charming writer. Shall I read the part you have marked now, or afterward to myself?"

"Pray be so good as to read it now. I should like to hear those beautiful sentiments

fall from your lips even though you did not originate them. Possibly you will think such marital felicity the dream of an exalted imagination never to be realized here."

"I am curious, and shall proceed at once," said Rae, blushing vividly.

"I believe in the promises of Nature ; I believe that in every want there is the promise of possible satisfaction. If we are hungry there is food somewhere, if we are thirsty there is drink. But in the things of the world there is often an indication of order rather than a realization of it ; so that in the confusion of accidents the hungry man may be starving in a beleaguered city, and the thirsty man, parched in Sahara. All that the wants indicate is, that their satisfaction is possible in Nature. Let us believe that for every one the true mate exists somewhere in the world. She is worth seeking for at any cost of trouble or expense, worth travelling round the globe to find, worth the endurance of labor and pains and privation. Men suffer all this for objects of far inferior importance ; they risk life for the chance of a ribbon, and sacrifice leisure and peace for the smallest increase of social position. What are these vanities in comparison with the priceless benefit, the continual blessing of having with you always the one person whose presence can

deliver you from all the evils of solitude, without imposing the constraints and hypocrisies of society? With her you are free to be as much yourself as when alone; you say what you think and she understands you. Your silence does not offend her; she only thinks that there will be time enough to talk together afterward. You know that you can trust her love, which is as unfailing as the law of nature. The differences of idiosyncrasy that exist between you, only add interest to your intercourse by preventing her from becoming a mere echo of yourself. She has her own ways, her own thoughts that are not yours, and yet are all open to you, so that you no longer dwell in one intellect only but have constant access to a second intellect, probably more refined and elegant, richer in what is delicate and beautiful. There you make unexpected discoveries; you find that the first instinctive preference is more than justified by merits that you had not discovered. You had hoped and trusted vaguely that there were certain qualities; but as a painter who looks long at a natural scene is constantly discovering new beauties while he is painting it, so the long and loving observation of a beautiful human mind reveals a thousand unexpected excellencies. Then come the trials of life, the sudden calamities, the long and wearing anxie-

ties. Each of these will only reveal more clearly the wonderful endurance, fidelity and fortitude that there is in every noble feminine nature, and so build upon the foundation of your early love an unshakable edifice of esteem and respect and love commingled, for which in our modern tongue we have no single term, but which our forefathers called worship.' ”

It was impossible for these two not to glance at each other as Rae paused, having finished the marked selection. Impossible for the gentleman to resist bending forward, grasping Rae's hand and saying in the most insistent of tones :

“ Miss Raymond—Rae ! May I not at least have the satisfaction of calling you, Rae ?— Consider how many months, miles, journeys, how many pains, penalties, anxieties suffered ”—

At this moment visitors were announced and Rae quickly withdrew her hand, as she rose to greet the newcomers.

EIGHT

"The experience of irresponsible dominion over women has also acted unfavorably upon men, as the use of irresponsible power always does. It has created in their minds immense self-complacency, a contemptuous opinion of women, which runs through the literature and legislation of all nations."

—*Mary A. Livermore.*

"Faymales have no more head than a hin, an' Hannah's no worse than her sec."

—*Pat Quinn.*

AFTER two years of continuous sight-seeing, Rae and her mother were only too glad to take refuge for a time in a quiet old mansion of Mrs. Raymond's, near South Carolina's metropolis, Charleston. It was located on a large plantation and admirably adapted for seclusion and complete rest.

By this time Rae decided that nature had never intended her for a bird of passage or a migratory animal of any kind; but that she was a creature having a strict habitat with probably plenty of work to keep her actively employed.

But what kind of work? That is the prob-

lem of the twentieth century woman. True, a good many of the nineteenth century women have stepped out of the old beaten track of household domesticity and opened up new fields of usefulness; and others, following the lead of man, in regarding marriage as a probable occurrence in their lives rather than the grand climax have chosen arduous professions.

Rae, however, since the marriage of Sidney and Retta, had ceased to think of marriage as even a probability in her career. She must accordingly discover what she was best fitted to do and prepare herself to do it well; when she would devote herself to it with ardor for six days in the week. On the seventh she would attend church, hear good music, of which she was fond, since it made her feel that there must be a divinely harmonious being, or beings, somewhere,—and listen to the prayers and sermon, provided they were worth listening to, for Rae's religious nature was well developed, only it protested at being fed on old theological husks.

Mrs. Raymond suggested that Rae should consider plans for engaging in some kind of newspaper work, when the time should come for their return to Chicago. Rae replied that she felt bewildered now that she had been around the world and seen so many strange

sights and heard so many strange things; besides, she had quite lost track of American progress; she must read, and think, and then possibly she would put results on paper. "Any way," she declared, "I shall not rush into print, as so many are doing nowadays."

After continuous travel and sight-seeing, their uneventful easy life in the isolated, southern mansion, covered with creepers and blooming vines and surrounded by noble trees was to them an idyllic one. It was pleasant to wander without haste among the flowers and trees unthinking of orders or species; it was delightful when indoors to feel that the whole house was theirs and that they could do as they liked in it; it was equally pleasant to read anything their fancy suggested, rather than feel obliged to pore over guide books and histories pertaining to places and peoples and things they were visiting, or about to visit.

Yet so strong was Rae's habit of studying the spot she was visiting, that almost before she was aware of the fact, she had procured historical matter concerning South Carolina and Charleston, and was reading it with avidity. It pleased her to learn anew that a considerable number of Huguenots were among the early pioneers of Charleston, and that the city was engaged in the revolutionary movement of

1775, being one of the first to declare its independence of British rule; and that up to the time of the Civil War, Charleston had prospered in a quiet way and was noted for its hospitality and refinement. Not so pleasant, but more thrilling was its history in connection with the nullification movement of 1830, was the part it took in precipitating the Civil War and the story of its terrible losses and sad fortunes in connection with that struggle. After the desolation of war came the slow rehabilitating process, followed by new thrift and progress, to receive a partial set-back by the cyclonic experience of 1885, and an almost paralyzing shock the very next year by the earthquake which laid half of it in ruins. From thence on, the career of Charleston, the impetuous and plucky, has been one of ever-increasing prosperity.

Having gotten at the facts in connection with Charleston, Rae's next action was to visit every part of the city and its vicinity, examining with care its architecture, streets, parks and gardens, its public buildings and homes; informing herself of its commercial advantages and of other particulars which, perhaps only a young woman from Chicago would have observed and considered; speculating meanwhile on the characteristics of the people who had

• been instrumental in making this city by the sea, the chief centre of the "Palmetto State"; recognizing in these characteristics the forces that had made South Carolina a power among the original thirteen colonies.

One morning Rae, tired of the vegetating life they were leading, sat idly rocking before an upstairs window commanding a good view of the plantation, when Mrs. Raymond brought in a bundle of papers and tossed them into her daughter's lap. Not being a devotee of newspaper literature, like her daughter, Mrs. Raymond herself took up some fancy work. She thought much newspaper reading demoralizing to the chaste feminine mind, and if it had been in her power, would gladly have prevented Rae's absorption of any papers but those of a religious character. And she would have insisted upon it if she could have gained her point without friction; but she loved her child too well to cross her seriously in anything, and so contented herself with mildly protesting at Rae's sometimes startling innovations. She was, however, well informed, and Rae liked nothing better than to chat with her mother over what she had read. Indeed, it was an old-time custom for Mrs. Raymond to work quietly at some mending or embroidery till Rae had had time to glance over the day's papers

when she would turn to her mother and give her a brief résumé of their contents. To-day, however, instead of doing this, she said:

"There's the queerest 'ad' in this paper I ever saw. I will read it to you.

"'A young man of inquiring and aspiring mind desires to correspond with one or more American ladies. Aim, culture. Address Lock Box 222.'

"Really, that is complimentary. How kind of him—he makes culture and American ladies synonymous; it is the first time I ever knew a man to admit that he could obtain culture or anything really worth having from a woman. I believe I will reply; he need never know me," she laughed. "He says he wants culture! I could teach him something—any American woman could do that. I have nothing to do just now, we leave before long."

"But—dear—consider," Mrs. Raymond exclaimed, in a horrified tone. "This unknown person might be a reprobate, might prove an escaped convict or a lunatic—lunatics do such odd things—and that advertisement, as you say, is queer. Or he might be a married man with a family, and only want a new sensation with some giddy girl. Think what a scandal there would be if it became known that Miss Raymond corresponded with such a person! It

would be in all the newspapers with great black staring head lines."

"Consider again," retorted Rae, "one has to do something in this world, or commit suicide to get a staring head line. True the 'ad' is queer, but then I am queer too. Besides I want a new sensation." Mrs. Raymond gasped as Rae continued, "I would really like to correspond with this lord of creation—asking guilelessly for culture at the hands of a woman. Suppose he has a wife and children, that's nothing to me. I shall not interfere with them. The aim is culture, not the usual one of marriage."

"But, dear Rae, marriage may be the real aim of the man."

"Well then, he can't have a wife and children."

"He might have, and get a divorce in order to marry again if he found some woman he liked better than his poor wife. Divorces are scandalously easy nowadays; our minister says that 'they should be put a stop to.'"

"Do you think divorce is easy for people who have any self-respect, any conscience, any heart? Easy to admit one has been a fool, a knave, a perjurer? Easy to be compelled, in order to free one's self from a strangling bond, to run the gauntlet of every scandal-mongering sheet

in the country, lay bare one's festering sore to a precedent-bound court and face despoliation of a fair name, perhaps only to obtain with one's freedom if one should be so lucky as to obtain it, a lingering life of shame and despair? Oh, it is all so easy—it is the old story of the church laying heavy burdens on the people, heavier burdens than they can bear. Thank heaven, the state is not quite so blind, so heartless, so relentless toward marital victims as our average orthodox church. By the way, have you read in your religious paper what those stupid men have been up to? The English I mean—they are worse, of course, than the American clergymen, more incorrigibly stupid and relentless."

"No, I have read nothing lately," replied Mrs. Raymond, quietly.

She always spoke gently when Rae got warm and flashed out rather than spoke her thought.

"Let me read it to you," Rae said, as she rose from her chair and went over to her writing desk. From one of its drawers she brought out a notebook, and glancing for a moment over the list of subjects, turned to a certain page and began to read, dropping into the chair by the desk.

"A meeting of the English Church Union was held on Tuesday night in Bennington,

when the Duke of Newcastle presided. Canon Knox-Little moved that a petition be presented to the bishops, praying them to take immediate and effectual steps to put a stop to the scandal resulting from the blessings of the Church being given by individual clergymen to the marriage of divorced persons contrary to the law of the Church of England, to the contempt of all ecclesiastical discipline, and to the grievous injury of Christian morality. The resolution was unanimously carried.'

"You see, on this subject the church is determined to persecute," commented Rae.

Mrs. Raymond thought best to make no reply, and Rae contented herself by remarking as she turned to her desk:

"The upshot will be that people will refuse more and more to let the Church meddle with marital matters, and will eventually refuse to be married by their formulas of indissolubility."

As Rae set about writing a letter, Mrs. Raymond sighed, and thought for the thousandth time: "Oh, if I could only have kept our daily newspapers out of Rae's hands! Then her head would not be so full of marital troubles disclosed by divorce scandals, and she would uphold our ministers in their efforts for marriage reform . . . or divorce reform I think it is the Church wants. . . . It is Rae

who talks so much about marriage reform. She is so like her poor dead father, only at her age he was angry with the clergy here because they advocated what he called 'damned slavery.' What a pity he swore so—I hope he repented on his deathbed and went to heaven. It turned out that he was right though about the negro slaves, that they ought to be freed . . . but it can never be right to free anybody from the marriage vows, no matter how bad they find married life for themselves. South Carolina has taken the right stand in respect to indissoluble marriage. . . .

" Poor Rae! She is altogether wrong in saying that 'we might hope to have a few real marriages if people were not tied so tight at the start as to strangle them.' Surely if men were not tied very tightly to their wives they would soon desert them for new ones. That is the reason the churchmen have made the bond indissoluble. I am glad, though, Rae hates what she calls orthodox marriage; for on that account, she will never marry, and I shall have her always with me."

Mrs. Raymond's face brightened at the last reflection, and she looked up from her fancy-work to rejoice her eyes with the sight of her beautiful daughter. She took delight in watching Rae even when her daughter's back was

wholly turned to her, as now—and she could see only her dark, glossy hair twisted in an odd but graceful knot at the back of her head, the beautiful nape of her fine neck, and the perfectly fitting back of her rose-colored morning gown.

For some time Mrs. Raymond continued to sit looking at her daughter, and to muse idly. The day was one of autumn's best, full of hazy charm and restfulness after the hot, fruitful summer, and the air came softly in through the open windows loaded with the perfume of flowers, and rhythmic with bird-song. She would have enjoyed walking about the old-fashioned flower-garden if only Rae could have accompanied her. However, she would wait for Rae to finish her letters, then they would have a walk or a ride before dinner.

Finally Rae stopped writing, gathering up as she did so several sheets of paper, and turning around on her revolving chair, said:

“Well, mother, I have been writing to that strange advertiser, who desires culture of a woman.”

“Please, Rae, do not send it. Have you forgotten what some investigator of women who answer personals said,—‘that there was something defective about these women, something abnormal, or at the very least they gave

evidence of being out of harmony with their social environments'?"

"No matter what a woman does, some man will find her abnormal for doing it. Why should a woman, or a mere girl as is usually the case, be any more abnormal for answering a personal, than a man for writing it? As for giving evidence that they are out of harmony with their social environment, that is just what all women who are not mere animals or automations, should be doing continually. A man-made environment can never be a harmonious environment for woman any more than a woman-made environment could answer for a man. But if you feel so about my answering the advertisement I will read you what I have written, and which I mean to mail, even though the fact should be made known in some way, and I be taken for a fool. If one is going to stop every time one thinks of doing a thing, and consider what people will think of it, or of the one who does it, one would never do anything worth the doing.

"LOCK BOX 222.

"SIR:—

"As I have the honor to be an American woman, and as it is a new departure for a man to recognize the fact that he can obtain culture from a woman, I, for one, make haste to answer your advertisement,

"Yes, I think America may well be proud of her women, proud that she has given them more opportunities of culture, more freedom of conduct than any other country has seen fit to do, and proud again that her women have proved themselves worthy of this trust.

("Of course the women have mostly rustled and crowded the men till they have gotten these things, like the importunate widow we read of in the Bible. But then it wouldn't do to say so; the men have to be flattered to get anything at all out of them,") Rae explained aside to her mother, and then continued:

"I long now to see our country take still another step,—entrust her women with yet greater privileges. I have reference to their political enfranchisement. I wish this new trust to be inaugurated, not alone because I believe women will then regard themselves with the self-respect God intended, and be better wives and mothers, but because I believe that unless this advancing step is taken, all will be lost that has been so hardly won.

"It is a law of nature that if we will not advance we must retrograde.

"It seems to me that America is slow in taking this new step, and that, in consequence, she is already losing something of her robust love of liberty and righteousness. Where are the new, strong, consecrated souls to take the place of those who have done their work so well?

"That country is the greatest which produces the greatest people. America has certainly raised up a greater people during her comparatively few years of apprenticeship than any other country. This is due to three causes, a great new world for proper environment, progressive conse-

crated souls for progenitors, and a high ideal,—that is, the establishment of a government of, by and for the people.

“But if she would realize her ideal she must recognize her women as half her people, and entrust them with the privileges belonging to them. No government of men, by men, and for men principally, can ever become a legitimate government of the people. Under such a one-sided rule the masses will, eventually, go to the wall. This has always been the case and America is proving no exception to the rule. Monopoly of the nation’s resources is sure to follow monopolistic rule, the rule of one sex over both sexes, to the exclusion of the mother element in humanity. God in his inscrutable wisdom has seen fit to divide his gifts to humanity between the sexes, and it follows that if we would have an all-round government, the women must have their full share in it.

“Not until that day arrives can we hope to have a government whose basis will be mutual good-will, love and helpful coöperation, rather than brute force and brutal competition. Emerson tells us, that the power of love as the basis of a state has never been tried. Furthermore, he asserts what is only too true; that—

“‘We live in a very low state of the world, and pay unwilling tribute to government founded on force. There is not among the most religious and instructed men of the most religious and civil nations, a reliance on the moral sentiment, and a sufficient belief in the unity of things to persuade them that society can be maintained without artificial restraints, as well as the solar system; or that the private citizen might be reasonable, and a good neighbor, without the hint of a jail or a confiscation. What is strange, too, there never was in any man sufficient faith in the power of rectitude to inspire him with the broad design of renovating the state on the principle of right and love.’

“There you see what one of the greatest and wisest of

your sex says about the government of men ; most assuredly governments rest on force and are honeycombed with distrust. It is because of the immense distrust of your sex that women from the beginning have been put down and kept down. Women, of course, go to the other extreme ; they are natural believers and dare all for love.

"I am making this letter too long.

"Very truly yours,

"LOCK BOX 333."

NINE

"We have had the morality of submission and the morality of chivalry and generosity; the time is now come for the morality of justice."

—*John Stuart Mill.*

Two days after the sending of the letter Rae was loitering in the garden enjoying the soft autumn air, when George Washington, the colored boy who ran errands "fur the missuses" appeared with a broad grin on his face. As he approached her, he drew from his inside pocket several letters, among which was one directed simply to "Lock Box 333."

George Washington was a curious soul, and had wondered all the way from the post office who had sent his young missus a letter without putting her name on the cover. Something "mighty quar" about Lock Box being on't, he thought.

As he handed the letters to Rae, he said, sympathetically:

"Hope dey hab no bad news in 'em!"

"Doubtless not," replied Rae, indifferently, guessing at once where lay George Washington's fears.

"Mebbe you'd like me to take Lock Box

letter to the other missus," pursued George Washington in a last hope to find out something about "dat ar quar letter."

"No, I am going to her immediately. I shall want nothing more this evening. Good-night, George Washington."

Rae always took the pains to call her devoted colored attendant George Washington, because he had explained to her:

"Miss Rae, de George ain't good fur nuffin' widout de Washington to it. Dat am de distinguishin' part."

With an admiring glance at "de handsome missus" and a respectful salutation, George Washington took his departure. Leaving her seat in the delightful wide-walked garden with its lordly trees and pretty plats and groups of flowers, Rae sought her mother through the large old mansion.

Glancing in at the main rooms below, she ascended the stairs, and presently found the lady of her search resting on a sofa in the cosy upstairs sitting-room. Mrs. Raymond was tastefully attired in a soft summer silk, fashioned much like a tea-gown; she was well preserved, even youthful and blooming. Though possibly her appearance was due even more to the youthful manner in which she wore her bronze-brown hair, and the pretty way her robes were

cut and trimmed. All this was done to please Rae, who frequently declared that there was no sense in people, women especially, rushing into old age.

"But people will think I want another husband," protested Mrs. Raymond. Then Rae would reply impatiently:

"Do let us have done with the nightmare of what people think. Let us do what is graceful and nice and right, and let people think as they please."

Rae took a rocking-chair and brought it up near her mother, then proceeded to examine the mail. The first letter she glanced over was from Retta, announcing that she was the happy mother of the prettiest babe any one ever laid eyes on, "Such a darling, a boy, and the very image of his papa!"

"That marriage is no doubt all right," commented Rae, as she finished reading Retta's letter.

"Why do you say that?" asked her mother, reaching for her embroidery.

"Because Retta is so happy."

"Don't you think Sidney is happy too?" questioned her mother, for at one time she had half suspected Rae and Sidney of being in love with each other.

"Oh, reasonably so; who can help loving

Retta? Still, it does not make so much difference as to just how happy the man is in his wedded life, if he is capable of keeping his unhappiness to himself. It is of supreme importance, though, that the wife, who is to usher into the world new souls, should be happy and loving—in love with her husband—if you please. She stands the chance then of rearing children who will one day rise up and call her blessed, and be a blessing to themselves.”

“How odd, Rae, that you should know these things. Girls in my day were too modest to discuss delicate subjects like love, marriage, and maternity.”

“Times are different now, mother. Girls know of such things earlier. The press of the day brings the whole world to their feet. If girls are ignorant on any great subjects, or small ones for that matter, it is their own fault. But listen to what Lock Box has to say. It is quite impersonal, and I can only guess he is not an American. I presume he is some foreigner who admires American ladies.”

“LOCK BOX 333.

“AMERICAN LADY :—

“I am much obliged to you for your prompt, excellent letter. It was the very real product of the intellect of a very real, progressive American woman, and I congratulate myself on my good fortune.

"Your assertion that the governments of men have always rested on a basis of brute force and are honeycombed with distrust, while not in keeping with the present ideas held of the brotherhood of man, is true. I thought, however, that your own government—pardon me! the government of your men—was contrary to the rule, and rested mainly for stability on the good will of the people who maintain it. I know that your standing army is insignificant.

"Yet, your country seems falling into line with older governments; witness the activity your nation displays in building and fitting up war vessels, and in the introduction of military drill into some of your public schools. These are ominous indications; though, of course, they are nothing but indications when compared to the menacing war establishments of Europe.

"Just consider what we have to endure on the continent; what our distrust of each other costs us. There is Russia, who has under arms 858,000 soldiers; Germany, 580,000; France, 512,000; Austria, 380,000; Italy, 300,000; England, 280,000; Spain, 100,000; and Belgium, 31,000. Even in times of peace our soldiers cost our people nearly a \$1,000,000,000 per year, besides the expense of the navies, which is half as much more.

"The brunt of all this enormous military expense falls mainly upon the toiling masses, keeping them in poverty and in a fettered, benighted condition, not to speak of the multitudes who find a premature death, who succumb to burdens they cannot sustain.

"Consider also the moral deterioration incident to life in barracks, and garrisons, to the one-sided development of man in the first flush or prime of manhood. These man-made and brute-force-maintained governments are not the best; and from time to time they are weighed in the balance and found wanting; then they topple to the earth.

"Still, I am convinced, that so far as America is con-

cerned, the time is not far distant when both sexes will coöperate in all departments of social and political life. At this point I am reminded of an article I ran across in looking over some bound volumes of Harper in the library here. Since you seem somewhat discouraged over the outlook, I will quote freely from it to reassure you. This article has to do with Chicago people, but I suppose these are but a fair sample of the whole ; more wide-awake than some communities, but yet not so aggressive as others, since I learn that three of your states have secured equal suffrage. The writer of this article is Julian Ralph. He admits that: 'There is a wholly gay and butterfly set in Chicago, but it is small, and the distinctive peculiarity of it lies in the fact, that in nearly all the societies and movements of which I am going to write we see the names of rich and stylish women. They entertain elegantly, are accustomed to travel, and rank with any others in the town, yet are associated with those forceful women whose astonishing activity has worked wonders in that city.'

"As you are doubtless more or less familiar with the history of Chicago's remarkable Woman's Club, I will omit the description of it, and proceed to call your attention to the doings of the committees appointed by it for special work in new fields of labor for women. And first the Reform Committee :

"This committee began its earnest work with the County Insane Asylum, where it was found that hundreds of women were herded without proper attention, three in a bed sometimes ; with insufficient food, with only a counterpane between them and the freezing winter night, and no flannels by day. The root of the trouble was the old one ; the root of all public evil—the appointment of public servants for political reasons and purposes. . . . Mrs. Helen S. Shedd was at the front of the asylum work, which is still going on.

"She led the Reform Committee into the poorhouse,

where they went as they always do, with the plea, "There are women there; we want a share in the charge of that place for the sake of our sex." They have adopted the motto, "What are you doing with the women and children?" and they find that the politicians try to frighten the women. They say: "You don't want to pry into such places and things; you can't stand it." But the Chicago ladies have proved that they can stand a great deal as we shall see, on behalf of humanity.

"While I was in Chicago in August some of the women were looking over the plans for four new police stations. It transpired as they talked that they have succeeded in establishing a Woman's Advisory Board of the Police. . . .

"The Education Committee of this indomitable club discovered, a few years ago, that the statute providing for compulsory education was not enforced. The ladies got up a tremendous agitation, and many of the leading men, as well as women, went to the capitol at Springfield and secured the passage of a mandatory statute insuring the attendance at school of children from six to fourteen years during a period of sixteen weeks each year. Five women were appointed among the truant officers, and the law was strictly carried out. It was found that it works well to employ women in this capacity. They are invited into the houses by the mothers, who tell them as they would not tell men, the true reasons for keeping their children from school; as for instance, that they have but one pair of shoes for six children. A beautiful charity resulted from this work.

"One of the new undertakings of the Chicago women is the task set for itself by the Municipal Reform League. . . . The work performed is all in the direction of forcing the public officials to do their duty. The Health Department is in charge of the alleys, and the Street Department of the streets.'

"Now, that I have called your attention to wonderful

doings of your wonderful country women, let me, for a moment, ask it in behalf of Chicago men, who are, it appears, quite ready to coöperate and forward their women in self-chosen reform work. It is a woman's testimony as given by Julian Ralph in the same article.

"She said that : 'the Chicago men not only spring to the help of a woman, who tries to get along, but they hate to see her fail, and they won't allow her to fail if they can help it.' She remarked that : 'the reason active Chicago women do not show the aggressive, harsh spirit and lack of graceful femininity which are often associated with women who step out of the domestic sphere, is because the Chicago women have not had to fight their way. The men have helped them.'

"You see I have good reasons for believing that the time is not far distant when America shall establish a government of the people, not only in name, but in reality.

"I wanted to say something in this letter about your last assertion 'that women are natural believers and dare all for love,' but if I do, I shall make this letter too long. Will reply to that assertion next time, if I am so fortunate as to hear from you again.

"Very truly yours,

"LOCK BOX 222."

A few days after the receipt of this letter Rae came swiftly up the broad walk toward her mother, who was enjoying a glorious sunset from an old-fashioned garden-seat.

"Mother—old lady!" she exclaimed, as she kissed her roundly, "whom do you think I ran across to-day in the post office?"

"Somebody you must like pretty well," replied the mother, "judging from your radiant

looks. I believe you grow handsomer every day, Rae."

"Thank you, mother. But I want you to guess, I want to see whether I should laugh at you, for not having the least bit of Yankee blood in your veins."

"Indeed! Well then, I guess the somebody who has suddenly put in an appearance here, is the same person who has dogged our footsteps half round the globe, Paul Petrovitch Alferiew, the Russian."

"Ah, mother mine, you are right; you will be a Yankee yet if you live long enough. It was really Paul; and I was glad to see him, in spite of all the trouble I have had with him. Indeed, I believe that every time he turns up I am gladder than ever to see his wholesome countenance. Heavens! we had such a desperate argument the last time he proposed to me, that I supposed I should never have the opportunity of looking into his charming blue eyes again."

"Is he looking as stalwart, as full of primeval energy as ever?"

"Well, no, he is much thinner. He has been ill, and when he was not smiling, there was a melancholy look about his eyes that pained me. Ah, well, he is almost recovered, and the rosy tint is beginning to be visible in his cheeks."

“Does his hair curl as closely to his head as it used to do?”

“Yes; and he loomed up above me in the same old, broad-shouldered fashion. Mother, do you know, it flashed across my mind the instant I saw him that he was Lock Box 222. You remember those ridiculous remarks I made in one of our rambles in China, that if I ever ran across a man who was not so self-conceited but that he believed he could really learn something of a woman I would marry him on the spot, provided he would have me? It all came back so vividly; the strange Chinese city, the narrow streets, the queer, one-storied architecture, the swarming people. And so when he rushed up to me grasping both my hands in his, half crushing them for joy, I could not help laughing and exclaiming:

“‘Ah, here is Lock Box 222. You have adopted a new rôle, Paul Petrovitch!’

“‘Yes, Rae, and I am happy to say you have promptly followed suit.’ Here he shook my hands with renewed ardor, and laughed in that funny fashion of his.

“As Paul seemed perfectly oblivious of the fact that the people in the post office were regarding us with amused amazement, and as, too, he continued to hold my hands in his after

he had stopped shaking them, I was obliged to urge :

“ ‘Come, let us get into the street and find our way home. We can then chat at our leisure.’ ”

“ We did get into the street, but listening to his eager talk I forgot all about George Washington and the carriage until we were half way home; then I looked back, and sure enough, there was George Washington with a broad grin on his face, slowly following us with the bays. Thinking that Paul might be tired, I asked him to get into the carriage with me and drive home. He said he had an appointment which he must hasten to meet, but that he would be up this evening. So we must look our prettiest, mother mine! I wish I had been giving more attention to my music. Paul will be sure to ask me to go over some of our old duets together. He always carries his violin with him, to keep him out of mischief as he says; but that cannot be true, he is too solid and serious-minded to be guilty of any kind of flippancy at his age,—twenty-eight to-morrow, he tells me.”

Though it was true that Paul Petrovitch Alferiew had the appearance of a typical Russian, he was in reality but a semi-Russian, having had an American mother. When our Civil War was

in progress, was in fact in its most desperate stage, Paul's father, the bold Ivan Petrovitch Alferiew determined to lend his strong arm to the cause of human freedom and made haste to join the ranks of the North.

After passing unharmed through many a bloody battle, toward the close of the war he was seriously wounded; but owing to the faithful care of his nurse he not only lived, but at length recovered something of his former vigor. By this time the war was happily ended, and Ivan's thoughts and longings turned to his native land. Oh, if he could only lend a hand, alas, a far from strong one now, toward freeing the multitudes of serfs, then he could die content. He would return to Russia and see what he could do. He made his preparations for departure, and had bidden adieu to all his old comrades, and was ready to say farewell to the woman who had saved his life. He had left her to the very last, fearing that on her account he would be unable to take his departure unless his arrangements should be so far completed as to forbid his changing them. During his illness, he had become devoted to this lovely Southern woman who, though desiring the slaves to be freed, yet sympathized with the South, feeling that Northern greed had had much to do toward precipitating the war. Her family, also, had

been divided in sentiment: one brother having fallen in the ranks of the North; the other, a charming, hot-headed young cavalier, having given his life, a willing sacrifice, to the cause of states' rights.

It never occurred to Ivan that his love was returned, so perfect was the composure of the lovely Southerner, not a glance betraying other than the interest of the careful, sympathetic nurse. Ah yes, the great bashful Russian would have as soon expected a celestial visitant to have fallen in love with him, as that the beautiful young American with the sad look in her dusky eyes, should return his love.

But love will out, provided it be deep and strong and true enough. Scarcely had Ivan taken in his the delicate palm of this woman than he was quite unmanned. Tears filled his eyes, and his limbs, not yet strong, grew strangely weak. He was obliged hurriedly to seat himself, when he bowed his great shaggy head in his hands utterly overcome. For an instant the nurse hesitated, looked at the bowed figure irresolutely, then went to Ivan's side, knelt down by him and put her arms around his neck, and laid her soft cheek against one of the hands supporting his head. He felt the thrill of her touch, which, like a miracle, turned his bitter tears of grief into tears of joy, and he

took the gentle being in his arms, and held her tightly to his breast.

“Ah, my little dove, you love me, you love me!” he said.

When he asked her:

“Shall we stay here, or go to Russia to help free my own people?”

She answered quickly: “I will go with you to Russia.”

And so it was arranged. They were married that same evening; the next day found them en route for Ivan’s native land, a land of strange extremes, but yet a land of rich promise.

What became of brave Ivan Petrovitch Alferiew and Viola, his devoted wife? Their story is almost too sad to tell. He languished many years in a dreary Siberian prison, and she died of a broken heart. And that was how it happened that Paul passed but a small portion of each year in his ancestral home. He became a wanderer, spending most of his time in England, where some of his beloved countrymen dwelt. It was in London that he first met Rae Raymond; being introduced to her there by a mutual friend of his mother’s, and of hers.

TEN

“Now no one charges that the legitimate uses of the marriage institution are otherwise than good. But a social institution whose uses are intrinsically good may be very badly administered and so produce mischief. This, I allege, is the case with the marriage institution. It is not administered for the living, or with reference to the present state of society, but only traditionally, or with reference to some wholly past state of society.”

—*Henry James.*

THE first part of the evening passed away in the most delightful manner. Rae had never looked more charming nor talked with more piquant, fluent grace.

Being a lover of pretty clothes, she was arrayed in a handsome robe which set off to perfection her beautiful figure, and threw into relief her fine complexion. She dressed well, not from a spirit of vanity, for she rarely gave her clothes a thought when once arrayed in them, excepting of course, when she was making a business of having her wardrobe overhauled, or a new costume added, but because, as she once laughingly said to her mother, “I am bound to show that I appreciate the fact that Nature has given me an attractive exterior.”

Mrs. Raymond had replied with pardonable pride :

“I am not sure but that you would do well to dress simply and inexpensively. Dressing richly and elegantly as you do, people attribute half your beauty to fine feathers.”

However, although Mrs. Raymond was capable of giving good advice to Rae in regard to simple attire, in this respect she herself was a sad delinquent, having long been noted for her rich and becoming toilettes. Her robe this evening was of expensive material and elaborately trimmed in lace and jet, and was beautifully made. You would have said at once, “Mrs. Raymond has always had the luxury of a full purse, and has never been obliged to count the cost of an extra yard of material, or the question of quality in the matter of trimmings”; and you would have been quite correct.

Paul Petrovitch Alferiew, on the contrary, had poor taste in dress and never looked to worse advantage or felt more ill at ease than when attired in a snug-fitting dress-suit. Such was his predicament on this evening of reunion with the two ladies who were—to speak in romance fashion—all the world to him; particularly, of course, the younger one. Somehow the clothes were not in character. Paul

would have felt more like himself in an ordinary traveling suit or in a working outfit; nature having intended him for a man of affairs and deeds, rather than for a man of graceful speech and ceremonies, or of fashionable observances.

However, it was so good to see and to be near his two charming friends, that presently his feeling of strangeness wore off and he was chatting and laughing with his old-time freedom. Ah, to be sure, how well they had become acquainted in the hit-and-miss and under-all and every-sort-of circumstance, under which they had traveled together abroad. So well, that after a time Paul found himself beside Rae on the sofa. Her mother occupied her favorite easy chair beside Rae, and the trio were then as close together as they had been many times before. Reminiscence after reminiscence, scene after scene, group after group of people, or it might be some individual, remarkable, or clever, or very companionable, were brought up for discussion, or lively remark, or piquant criticism, or simply for gay laughter. The time sped rapidly, till finally Paul said:

“It must be getting late. I will go.”

“Not until we have had one piece of music. I saw you smuggle your violin in when you came,” promptly replied Rae.

"If it is not too late?" responded Paul, as he looked at Mrs. Raymond.

"Never mind," said Rae. "You know you will sleep better to-night if we try that new duet you brought up. Please, get out your violin,—or wait, I will take it out for you. Dear old violin, how natural you look!" observed Rae, as she carefully lifted out of its case this companion of many a ramble and journey. "I suppose, if possible," she added, turning again to Paul, "that you play better than ever, while I play decidedly worse."

"Surely not!" Paul said with a rueful look.

"Ah, you have begun to compliment me in the same old fashion," said Rae, laughing, and as Paul looked astonished, continued: "I really do feel condemned, but you know how it is. In spending my time reading and wondering how the world is to be reformed, like all reformers, I forget to reform myself. Every week I think I will begin my regular practice, but the weeks slip by and the practicing is not done—only a little playing when a musical mood seizes me. Notwithstanding this, the piano is in excellent order."

"Yes, so I perceive," replied Paul, in the midst of tuning his violin.

At this point in the musical performance

Mrs. Raymond rose and coming toward the amateur artists said with some hesitation :

“I think I will retire. I have a slight headache. I will hear this new duet when Rae has practiced her part, and can give better satisfaction than will likely be the case to-night.”

She gave her hand to Paul as she finished speaking, he shook it warmly, and bade her, “Good-night and happy dreams.” Rae kissed her mother tenderly ; Mrs. Raymond could hardly have slept otherwise.

The new duet did not prove to be very difficult, the air was catchy and charming, and Rae thought the performance was quite a success ; so she fully expected as in times past to be called on for another and yet another selection, Paul was usually “such a music fiend.” To her surprise, however, he laid down his violin with a singularly melancholy smile and turned away, saying :

“I can play no more. Music has lost its charm, has died out of my soul.”

“That is because you have not yet regained your health. Your soul will be full of music and joy when that is restored.”

Rae answered gaily, hoping to ward off dangerous reflections ; but Paul was not to be thus thwarted :

“You don’t ask what made me ill, nor seem

to be aware that I am not the Russian you used to joke for being so full of the wild health of the steppes, 'a belated primeval giant,' you said."

Still hoping to avert serious talk which might lead to embittering controversy, Rae glanced up at Paul in her sauciest manner and asked:

"What made you ill, Paul Petrovitch?"

"What made me ill—you, you incorrigible sorceress of the new world. Though you can outwit me, I still can overpower you. Come, you must talk to me, you must tell me why you everlastingly say 'nay' to me, when it should be 'yea.'"

As he finished speaking, he took Rae's hand and led her to the sofa. She felt unable, nor did she wish to resist Paul's firm clasp. Without relinquishing her hand Paul urgently insisted:

"Why, why will you not accept my love, why will you not be my dear wife? What rubbish is it that makes it impossible? For heaven's sake—for sweet love's sake, for the sake of our own future happiness and success, which I am confident is bound up each with the other, do let us try to come to some understanding."

"How can we? I am tired of repeating, of telling you over and over again how much I

despise our orthodox marriage system, and that it is impossible to me. The more I consider this church relic of barbarous times, its irrational and immoral vows, the more vexed I am at the servility of people. Do you know it makes me actually angry when a man proposes marriage to me. It seems absurd, demoralizing, outrageous to me, that two young people—fools—should be driven into pledging themselves irrevocably to each other for better or worse, and so long as they both shall live. How can such marriages prove to be anything but for the worse? They help fill our asylums, our jails and our hospitals. Their fruits are known in the make-up of the political world that consists of selfish tyrants on the one hand and servile masses on the other. Every man and woman of us ought to live and ought to marry for the betterment, and only for the betterment of ourselves and of humanity. There is no step in our lives so important for either good or ill, as marriage. We find this proven in literature which gives an infallible record of the nations and of individuals. Marriage is the central theme, and the climax in the majority of all the books that are written, and rightly so, involving as it does such immense responsibilities and consequences, not only to the participants, but to society and also to unborn gener-

ations. But what is this conventional marriage of which all modern wooing is the precursor? It is an alluring trap baited with the specious vow 'for better or worse until death us do part.' Alas! once caught the victims suffer a thousand heartaches, shed countless tears, endure tremendous woes, and undergo such demoralizing self-analysis that they are ready for almost any fate. Heavens! why will people allow themselves to be beguiled into this sort of thing? Will nothing teach them better? The growth of common sense, the love of liberty, the increasing numbers of self-supporting women leading independent and self-respecting lives? Is it any wonder, Paul, that marriage is beginning to be shunned as the 'suicide of love'? With one hand the Church offers a premium to celibacy; with the other she is perfectly willing to bless a loveless marriage. The Church invented the lock to this trap; and now it is the Church which sets up a howl whenever the state, occasionally for certain desperate causes, forces this lock and lets the victims free. The state encourages marriage and therefore as a good physician must treat those who have embraced unfortunate marriages, with justice. Furthermore, the state now realizes that for its own preservation, it must add to justice, mercy, and equalize burdens by taxing unmarried men,

by dowering penniless girls, and, as is now the case in France, by securing important privileges to the heads of families.

“O, Paul Petrovitch, though I should live to the age of Methuselah, and single blessedness become as monotonous as the interminable steppes of Russia, no such marriage for me!”

Paul sat seemingly lost in thought while Rae flashed, rather than spoke, her impetuous thoughts. He was determined not to get angry with her this time, and so lose all chance of winning his suit. This interview must not terminate as his last had done, when after an angry controversy he had bidden her good-night, to learn next day that she and her mother had left for home. Paul noting Rae's look of gloomy abstraction, felt that she had no intention of breaking the silence that followed her last words, and did not know but that she was afraid to say more lest she should lose control of her tongue and temper, not an uncommon thing with her when marriage was the theme, and so he said sympathetically :

“Since I have been giving so much attention to this subject I agree with you, Rae, in feeling that the time is past for imposing upon people pledges which are irrational to say the least. By this time everybody ought to be pretty well convinced that all is fallibility from the Adam

of Genesis to the Adam of to-day; and that fallible creatures should not be made to pledge themselves as if infallible, or as if man was made for the observance of the orthodox marriage rite, rather than that the rite itself is only one of a multitude of marital experiments for furthering the happiness and evolution of humanity. I am of the opinion, though, that life is a series of compromises, and when one must make a choice of evils, one should, of course, choose the least. We know each other well enough to be pretty sure that we can always love, honor, cherish and serve one another. Or, if you do not like that word, serve, in your part, tell the minister to exchange it for the one in mine, cherish I think it is, for I am quite willing to pledge myself to serve you till I die."

Paul put his arm around Rae to emphasize his last remark, but Rae seemed quite oblivious of his action and spoke as impetuously as before.

"Oh yes, Paul, but you are in love now; wait till we have been married five years, marital love lasts no longer than that, I am told, and I shall have developed into a Rosamond Vincey or you into a Grandcourt; wait until love has been supplanted by hate, and our enforced companionship has given birth to vicious feeling. How could we, after that, maintain any

feeling of self-respect in regard to a pledge that had proved impossible of fulfillment? Must we keep on for worse till one of us dies, or disgraces himself by playing the part of deserter, or resorts to some trickery to obtain release from bonds too galling to be borne?"

Paul replied, seriously:

"The marriages you have referred to, those of Lydgate and Rosamond, and Gwendolyn and Grandcourt were phenomenal failures. They were exceptions. Most people jog along very well together. They know that it is not easy to free themselves from the marital bond, not possible in this place, for instance, or in Roman Catholic countries, not possible for respectable people who care for their good names, so they make the best of their marriages even, if the tie does not meet their expectations, or perhaps their needs."

"I beg to differ from you, I don't think they do jog along together very well: if we are to judge from the literature of the day; or, the proceedings of the divorce court; or, take into account the people who come under our own observation. I, personally, would not put up with the treatment accorded to the generality of wives. Before I get angry, or, possibly to ensure my not getting angry in talking over this part of the subject, let me read you some-

thing I found the other day in one of Annie Besant's books ; it expresses my own views, if anything, better than I can do it myself."

Rae stepped into the library and presently came back with a book ; turning the leaves rapidly, she found what she wanted, and began to read in her clear, contralto tones :

" "It may be hoped that when divorce is more easily obtainable, the majority of marriages will be far happier than they are now. Half the unhappiness of married life arises from the too great feeling of security which grows out of the indissoluble character of the tie. The husband is very different from the lover ; the wife from the betrothed ; the ready attention, the desire to please, the eager courtesy, which characterized the lover, disappear when possession has become certain ; the daintiness, the gaiety, the attractiveness which marked the betrothed are no longer to be seen in the wife whose possession is secure ; in society a lover may be known by his attention to his betrothed, a husband by his indifference to his wife. If divorce was the result of jarring at home married life would very rapidly change ; hard words, harshness, petulance would be checked where those who had won the love desired to keep it, and attractiveness would no longer be dropped on the threshold of the home.' "

"Oh yes, I suppose there is some truth in what Mrs. Besant says, but she had an unusually unfortunate marital experience and naturally sees the dark side of marriage, and probably attributes the blackness of it to the indissolubility of the tie. There are two sides to this question as to every other. I should like for my part to be tied to you just as tight as possible. I could not imagine myself ever being indifferent to you, Rae Raymond!" Paul's gaze was full of love.

"That's the way you all talk," returned Rae, turning over the leaves of the book, unmindful of the tender glance Paul was bestowing upon her. "Here is what a poet says on the same subject."

"The present system of restraint does no more in the majority of instances than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to those whom they find impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their life in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partner, of the welfare of their mutual offspring; those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The

early education of the children takes its color from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humor, violence and falsehood. Had they been suffered to part at the moment when indifference rendered their union irksome, they would have been spared many years of misery; they would have connected themselves more suitably, and would have found happiness in the society denied them by the despotism of marriage.

““. . . Love is inevitably consequent on the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint; its very essence is liberty; it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear; it is therefore most pure, perfect and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality and unreserve.’”

“Good, very good . . . but would there not be danger that all these unhappy married people you speak of would make a rush for freedom if the law was relaxed and divorce made easy? Think what an unsettling in all the relations of life there might be! There would soon be the fierce competition and instability in married life, that there is now in the industrial world, in finance and in politics.”

Rae responded, quickly :

“From whence come all the wars and rumors of wars, fierce contentions, fierce competitions

that we read of and see going on about us? The first murder we read of in the Bible was perpetrated by Cain. Before his birth, Eve had been subjected to Adam on account of the curse which was thought to have been called down upon the human family because she had desired wisdom for herself and her husband. From that time to this, free access to the means of obtaining wisdom have been denied woman, and by some means or other each new Eve has been subjected to each new Adam. I repeat, there is no way of judging of a tree but by the fruit it bears. The old marriage system, still in force, of denying woman free access to wisdom, and unduly subjecting her, making her as far as possible an irresponsible creature, has, to be sure, peopled the earth, but the quality has been, and still is, poor. Man's inhumanity to woman, the fact that he has denied the wife of his bosom and the mother of his children free access to all knowledge, forgetting that God has entrusted her with the awful responsibility of maternity, speaks for itself!"

"Would you have the process reversed? The man subject to the woman?" jokingly replied Paul, who had never considered the subject seriously—at least not until refused by Rae Raymond.

"No, no, heaven forbid!" exclaimed Rae, in

a tragic voice and with an expressive shrug of her shoulders. "No woman, I am sure, would wish for an instant to make of any man, and especially of her husband and the father of her children, a slave, or a toy! The men whom women have worshipped have usually been manly, frank, brave, outspoken, lovers of liberty and ready if need be, like Christ, to die for the right."

"Well, well," said Paul, shaking his head, but with a humorous twinkle in his grave blue eyes, "I can only reiterate, that so far as I am concerned, the tie cannot be too indissoluble; provided that I can secure Rae Raymond for my wife. Should I fail in winning my heart's choice, and in a moment of temptation marry some one else, I might some day become a radical convert to your views."

"Exactly! then you admit that under certain circumstances you might make a marriage, that you would wish to have abrogated? You have changed since we last talked this subject over, Paul Petrovitch."

"Yes, I have changed, changed a great deal. Illness and confinement to my room for weeks together have given me time to think, besides, I have been reading deeply on the subject of marriage, past, present and prospective. Rae, I am quite willing to devise with you some kind

of heterodox marriage, since you will have nothing to do with the usual orthodox, conventional one."

As these words fell on Rae's ear she looked up quickly from the book through which she was still glancing; putting it down on the table by which she was sitting she deliberately started toward Paul, who was seated on the sofa. He saw the look of deep affection on her face, and in her beautiful eyes. He rose at once, and before either were aware of their action, their arms were about each other and they had exchanged their first kiss.

After that pledge of love and trust had been given, Paul was the first to speak.

"I am ready now to endorse any kind of marriage of love and liberty that we can devise in place of the old one. Indeed, I love you so well, so truly, that if I fail to make you the right kind of a husband and you wish to be free again, I will step back and out bidding you Godspeed though my heart breaks."

Silence too full for speech fell on these two after Paul's last words. Presently, however, Rae looked up and said:

"You have the best heart in the world, Paul, and I think you will find me faithful and true. The most important of my reasons for insisting on having nothing to do with the orthodox

marriage, is that when I do a thing I want to start right; I am not willing to enter into so responsible a relationship by making irrational vows that stultify my sense of truth and right. Besides, I love liberty so well that I am quite sure if the angel Gabriel himself came to me and took me to the seventh heaven that we read of in our Bibles, and locked me in so that I could never get out, that I should at once begin to be unhappy and try to get out."

"That reminds me of a book on Marriage and Divorce I was reading the other day, the motto on its first page being,

" 'Where they who are without would fain go in,
And they that are within would fain go out. ' "

Both laughed at the human nature disclosed in these lines, when Paul said :

"I will not detain you longer to-night, dearest Rae. Please talk this matter over with your mother to-morrow, and I will call in the evening and learn the result of your conference. Tell her all, and perhaps we three can devise some way whereby she may become a mother-in-love to me as well as to you, monopolist!" Paul pinched Rae's arm as he called her monopolist, "instead of the usual much despised, orthodox mother-in-law."

"How inventive you are to be sure," Rae laughed merrily.

"And now good-night Rae, dearest!"

Paul took Rae's hand and held it a moment in a close, affectionate clasp, but did not offer her another kiss. And thus he left the bright, freedom-loving, progressive American woman, on her part hardly yet aware that Paul Petrovitch had won, and that she was already bound to him by the weightless chains of love.

ELEVEN

“The more civilized the nature the more durable and exclusive does the marriage union become. . . . The fleeting connections supposed by some Free Love theorists are steps backward and not forward; they offer no possibility of home, no education of the character, no guarantee for the training of children.”

—*Annie Besant.*

THE next day, after breakfast, while Mrs. Raymond and Rae were in the garden enjoying a bath of sunlight and the chattering of some birds in trees close by, Rae, after a meditative silence, said:

“Mother, I told Paul last night that I would consult with you, to learn, if there was not some other way by which we could be married than the usual orthodox way.”

“If you must marry, Rae, I could wish you to marry like other people, and that Paul should be the man, but why marry? Not long ago, I heard you say, laughingly, to one of your friends, that there was a good deal in Balzac’s advice, ‘don’t marry.’ Then he goes on to say:

Who marries nowadays? Only merchants for the sake of capital, or to be two to drag the cart; * * only brokers and notaries who want a wife's dot to pay for their practice; only miserable kings who are forced to continue their miserable dynasties.' "

"Pretty good, mother. You have been committing that precious piece of advice to memory, I see. Why do I marry? Because I am in love with Paul and imagine we could make our lives more effective together, than apart. Then I have become so used to having him around that I miss him wonderfully when he is away. But I would give him up entirely, rather than be tied to him in a strangling way."

Rae spoke the last words very emphatically and with knit brows. Mrs. Raymond looked dejected and spoke despondingly:

"I can never sufficiently regret that I was not able to keep worldly newspapers out of your hands. Otherwise you would never have been that dreadful anomaly we call 'The New Woman,' with so much knowledge and so many queer ideas and wanting to do things in new ways. I fear that you will never be able to get along with any man in the marriage relation. You have your father's masterful spirit. I could never have lived with him, I am sure, if I had expressed such ideas."

Mrs. Raymond sighed heavily as she finished speaking.

"That is because father was one of the old style men, very positive and self-assertive, and brought up mostly on the Bible. At any rate he got his notions of the frailty of woman chiefly from it. Both portions of the Bible are hard on women,—the Old Testament with its fall of man because of the woman and its degrading polygamy; the new with its asceticism, or in lieu of that, its utilitarian marriage."

"It seems a little odd, my dear, that after all you have said, that you should be going to marry a Paul."

Mrs. Raymond smiled a trifle maliciously as she made the last reflection. Rae was angry in a moment, and said with flashing eyes:

"My Paul is altogether a new Paul. I believe I would have killed the old theologic woman-slaver outright; that is, as soon as I had discovered his sentiments in regard to my sex. So far as women are concerned, St. Paul remained an orthodox Jew to the end of his days."

"I think it was you, Rae, who was deprecating in Mrs. E. Lynn Linton, Paul Bourget and others the use of intemperate speech, the other day."

"Well, when an apostle deliberately writes:

‘Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience;’ ‘Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord . . . therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything;’ ‘Let the women learn in silence with all subjection;’ ‘But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence;’ and so on, he gives occasion for intemperate speech. Had not Paul deliberately written these things and sent them to various churches, the Roman Catholic Bishops would never have been able to incorporate them in their Bible, and by their aid still further degrade woman, and of course, thus check civilization. As disciples generally improve on the teaching of their leaders it is no surprise to learn from history that, ‘The Councils of the Mediæval Church forbade the education of woman and declared her unfit for instructions.’ When this dictum was disobeyed by some kind-hearted nuns they were stoned in the streets. I suppose you are not aware, mother, that your beautiful early Christian fathers denounced women as ‘noxious animals,’ and ‘painted temptresses,’ ‘necessary evils,’ ‘desirable calamities,’ and ‘domestic perils.’ The law followed

suit and declared the wife to be 'in all cases and under all circumstances her husband's creature, servant and slave,' and it is said this sort of thing went on up to the time of the English Reformation when the sky began to clear in woman's behalf. I do not think Alfred E. Giles is out of the way when he declares that 'the Bible, the Protestant sects, and monogamic, indissoluble marriages are the work, the outgrowth and the offspring of the Roman Catholic Church.' "

Mrs. Raymond was silent for a little while after Rae stopped speaking, then replied with her usual sigh :

"The newspapers are surely to blame for your having such hard feelings toward the Church and its apostles and preachers. In my time we were taught chiefly out of the Word of God and never doubted but that it was God himself speaking through St. Paul, and we obeyed our husbands most dutifully, as old-fashioned children used to obey their parents. But did you not say a while ago that it was difficult to establish human ties upon a firm basis, or were you reading it to me,—and that the parental relation with its almost infinite tenderness, year after year, through the larger part, if not the whole of life, was the work of ages? Then you went on to say, or read, that

the pre-matrimonial lover had at last been successfully established, and it now remained to evolve with more certainty the lover and husband combined. Surely Roman Catholicism has done a good thing to establish, as it has, the idea of permanency in the marital relation. Did not the Church take charge of marital matters when the law was utterly relaxed? when people married *ad libitum* and often, there being in Rome a wife who was married to her twenty-third husband, she, herself being his twenty-third wife?"

"Yes," said Rae, angrily, "and then came the fanatical extreme of Church asceticism, still greater degradation of women and indissolubility of marriage for the masses. Lecky, in his history of European morals, tells us that 'woman was represented as the door of hell, as the mother of all human ills, that she should be ashamed at the very thought that she was a woman, that she should live in continual penance on account of the curses she has brought upon the world, that she should be ashamed of her dress, for it is a memorial of her fall, of her beauty, the most potent instrument of the demon'—pah! rubbish fit to fool fools with."

"Oh Rae, how like your father you talk and look when you are angry! I have heard him go on about the preachers who upheld slavery

in their pulpits and by their pens, just as you are doing to-day about their way of degrading women, as you call it. Still, I am sure that if they have worked some ill in the marital relation, they have also done some good, indeed a great deal of good. No one now would think of venturing to marry more than three or four times at the outside; even if in each instance their partners had died; it would look scandalous, you know, so firmly has the idea of the sacredness and indissolubility of the tie been implanted in all countries subject to Rome, or which have been at one time under Roman Catholic dominion."

"Oh yes, they have done some good," said Rae, entirely out of patience, "so has the devil."

Ordinarily Rae would not admit there was any devil in "God's world." She often declared it was a bugaboo invented by the priest to scare women into subjection to man, and man himself into submission to priestly control. Just now, however, she was too angry to do other than say the worst things that her tongue could devise.

Mrs. Raymond held her peace for a time, while Rae looked angrily off into the hazy distance, quite unmindful of the beautiful morning, the glorious foliage about them, and the

twittering birds. At length Mrs. Raymond ventured timidly:

“I think, dear Rae, their way about marriages was a pretty good one. We were sure of our husbands, our homes and our children. Then we had no newspapers to make us uneasy with much learning, and we gracefully submitted our wills to our husbands which ensured us harmony in our homes. There was no such thing as divorces in my day. Indeed, I never remember any one getting a divorce, here in my old home. But upon looking into one of the pamphlets you have been reading on ‘Marriage and Divorce,’ I find it stated that the last census report shows that divorces in the United States increased during the nineteen years between 1867 and 1886 nearly one hundred and fifty-seven per cent., while the population in the same time increased about sixty per cent. New Hampshire led the rest of the New England States in the matter of divorces, there being in that state one divorce for every nine hundred and seventy-four marriages during the years 1880 to 1886 inclusive.”

“Well, mother, I suppose you think because South Carolina upholds indissoluble marriages, and frowns upon divorces, that she is a very sweet, clean, moral state. For my part I don’t have to look into the newspapers, only into the

faces of her people, to learn the moral status of her men. If I wanted accurate information I could learn it from her statute books."

"Well, the marriage business is a puzzling question, I am sure," sighed the mother, quite taken aback. Rae was now beginning to cool off somewhat. She felt guilty that she had spoken so angrily to her mother, and she responded :

"You begin to understand, mother, do you not, why I am so set against the orthodox marriage with its immoral promises to begin with, and its mixed-up divorce complications, provided the marriage proves a failure?"

"Dear Rae, you forget that while you turn your back on the requirements of the Church, you also treat the marital laws of the state with contempt. You do not propose to obtain any license, and will not even pledge yourself to a magistrate. I thought you always prided yourself on being such a good citizen, on never breaking any of the laws, and, on telling the truth about your possessions, in consequence paying quadruple the taxes paid by any man having the same amount of property."

"So I do want to be a good citizen, but I will not let the state meddle with my marital affairs, for it still clasps hands too closely with the Church in the marriage business. I will

never promise any state official, any more than I would a preacher, that I would live in the marital relation with a man for better or worse so long as he and I should live, for I am quite sure, that if I became convinced our marriage, for either of us, was for the worse, that I should bolt, as the politicians say."

"If you marry in some unlicensed, heterodox manner, people will call you a free-lover. You will not like that, Rae; you are so proud."

A crimson wave passed over Rae's brow and neck as the term "free-love" greeted her ear. She spoke angrily again:

"For heaven's sake, mother, do not soil your lips with that odious phrase. No! I would not wish to be called a free-lover, because as the term is used now, it means one who either indulges in, or upholds the practice of fickle, irresponsible passion. Free love ought to mean that love for another which wells up freely from the depths of the heart. The divinity in us, however, is so ill-mixed or crudely developed that we cannot be sure that what seems fair is really so. Perjuring marriage ceremonies teach us to dissimulate, to be easy-promise makers and easy-promise breakers. Possibly in time this term of reproach, free-love, will be rescued from the mire and come to mean spontaneous, loyal love, not for a day, but for all time."

"I hope so," replied Mrs. Raymond, scarcely knowing what she said, for she was observing how unusually pale Rae looked after the subsidence of the crimson flush. Then she added, "Do not let us talk any more on this subject. You know that in the end your wishes are always mine, my dearest child. Ah, here comes George Washington with our mail."

TWELVE

God made woman the responsible sex, par excellence, by endowing her with motherhood. Man, in his ignorance, has done his best to make of this woman a lay figure, so far as responsible action is concerned. Woman, through ignorance and physical weakness has accepted the cue thus given. The time is at hand, however, when civilized womanhood should accept her destiny. She should seek wisdom from all sources where it is to be found ; ponder deeply and act from her own sense of right. God meant her to use the faculties he gave her, not to be guided servilely by those which He gave to somebody else.

“She stands at the Gate of the New Spiritual Era, as she herself is the Gate by which New Life comes into the World.”

—*Elizabeth Hughes.*

THE letters which George Washington handed to Rae, with one exception, proved to be business letters. This letter she glanced over, replying to the query of her mother:

“It is a letter from Paul. When we have lunched and you have had your afternoon siesta, I will read it to you.”

Little did Mrs. Raymond guess from Rae's look and manner, the contents of that letter, and that it was the precursor of a crisis in their lives. It was well that she did not · why should

one be made acquainted a moment sooner than needful with intelligence calculated to wring the heart with apprehension and foreboding?

At least, so thought Rae who did not put in an appearance after lunch until Lotta came to her room, saying:

“Missus is awantin’ Missy Rae to come wid de letter.”

When Rae came in, Mrs. Raymond was struck with the change which had taken place in her daughter’s countenance since they had left the dining-room two hours before. Indeed, the contents of Paul’s letter had so greatly disturbed Rae’s peace of mind that she was unable to command the outward expression of her feelings.

Her usually glowing face was quite pale and bore marks of the conflict going on within. Her strong, though well-modelled features had a pinched look; her brilliant eyes seemed suddenly to have sunken in their sockets, and the light in them to have been half quenched.

Neither did she enter the room with her usual eager, elastic step, but wearily.

She had the appearance of a plant of sunny clime suddenly transported to one of frost and ice.

Upon catching sight of her daughter’s face, Mrs. Raymond rose and met her ere she had

half crossed the room. Rae stooped and they kissed one another.

Immediately after, Rae made a poor attempt at a laugh and remarked, in answer to her mother's question:

"Oh, I am practicing the art in which you are such an adept, mother—and I am succeeding remarkably well, judging from the effect I have produced on you."

"What art is that?" asked Mrs. Raymond, wonderingly.

"The art of borrowing trouble."

"Just like you, Rae, to laugh and try to cover up real trouble from me. Do tell me what is the matter, child? Has Paul met with a serious accident?"

"Not that I know of, but I will read you his letter, so that you need no longer practice the Yankee gift of guessing."

"DEAREST RAE:

"May I beg that while you are considering the important question of our marriage that you will also give attention to another matter scarcely less important?"

"You know that on my father's side I am Russian; on my mother's American; that by virtue of my parentage I owe allegiance to two countries as different as the two parts of our Bible, the Old Testament and the New. On my part I have not forgotten that you, my love, are wholly American; were born and bred in that phenomenal city by the lake, midway between the two great oceans, and at the centre of the most progressive civilization upon earth.

"Now, the question arises; where, when we are wed, shall we cast our lot? to which country shall we offer our united selves, our prayers, our hearts' best love and most ardent hopes?

"If we were poor and obliged to earn our daily bread, there would be no question about our choice, for America is still the poor man's country, offering him the best returns for his labor; and the finest, most complete culture for his children.

"But by the efforts of those who have gone before us we are both rich in this world's goods, and do you not think the question for us to settle is, where are we most needed, in America with its population alive, alert, progressive, or in poor Russia with its millions of dead souls?

"With the asking of the question, is not the answer obvious, dear Rae?

"Poor, sad Russia! Often in the night as I wake, and sleep refuses to lull me into forgetfulness, I find myself repeating over Gogol's passionate words:

"Russia! Russia! from the beautiful distant places where I dwell, I see thee, I see thee plainly, O my country! Thy nature is niggardly. In thee there is nothing to charm or awe the spectator. . . .

"No; there is nothing splendid in thee, Russia, nothing marvellous; all is open, desert, flat. Thy little cities are scarcely visible in thy plains—like points, like specks. Nothing in thee is seductive, nothing even delights the eye. What secret, mysterious force, then, draws me to thee? Why does thy song, melancholy, fascinating, restless, resounding throughout all thy length and breadth, from one sea to the other, ring forever in my ears? What does this song contain? Whence come these tears and these sobs which find their echo in the heart? What are these dolorous tones which strike deep into the soul, and wake the memories? Russia, what desirest thou of me? What is this obscure, mysterious bond which unites us to each

other? Why dost thou look at me thus? Why does all that thou containest fix upon me this expectant gaze? My thought remains mute before thy immensity. This very infinity, to what forebodings does it give rise? Since thou art limitless, canst thou not be the mother country of thoughts whose grandeur is immeasurable? Canst thou not bring forth giants, thou who art the country of mighty spaces? This thought of thy immeasurable extent is reflected powerfully in my soul, and an unknown force makes its way into the depth of my mind. My eyes are kindled with a supernatural vision. What dazzling distances! What a marvellous mirage unknown to earth! O Russia!’

“Perhaps you imagine, that Russia having abolished serfdom, and, to a certain extent having re-divided her land, is taking further progressive steps: by permitting to the people and to the press, liberty of speech; by guaranteeing political rights and privileges; by reforming the caste system; by improving the educational system throughout the country; and by making radical changes in the system of taxation and tariffs. I beg of you, do not imagine this!

“Reaction is, and has been, for some time the order of the day. In Russia as elsewhere, wealth is becoming the dominant power. The insufficiency of the lots of land granted the muzhik and the lack of proportion between the revenue and the tax imposed have already brought the small cultivators back into dependence upon the great proprietor, and serfdom has reappeared in disguise.

“Just as I perceive from similar causes a disguised slavery has appeared in your midst. But you have every means at hand to put down such slavery.

“Why! give the Chicago women time enough and they alone, backed as they always are by their men, could make the whole world over and make it better.

“Can you blame me that I mean to leave no stone un-

turned to obtain, if possible, the coöperation of two Chicago ladies to join me in bringing aid to lonely Russia?

"Nu, my golubtchika, this long letter should come to a close, should it not?"

"Expect me early to-night."

"Very truly yours,

"PAUL."

"That was a fine compliment he paid the Chicago women," said Mrs. Raymond, reflectively.

"Yes; but mother! how can I think of leaving for good our beloved city, our beautiful country,—the newspapers!"

Probably if Rae had racked her brains for the most convincing of arguments as to why they should remove to Russia she could not have hit upon anything which would have turned her mother's thoughts so willingly in that direction as her off-hand exclamation "the newspapers!"

What young American woman but will sympathize with Rae in this respect? Are not our bright, breezy, indefatigable, irrepressible, all-embracing, ever-with-you, newsy sheets, the pride, the pillar, and the safety-valve of our nation? Better far than any standing army, more efficient educationally than our magnificent school systems,—the press is the mouthpiece of the people urging humanity out of undue tutelage to effete laws and customs, and into a civilization completer than any dreamed of by the seers of the ages!

"Why, does not Russia have newspapers the same as we?" asked Mrs. Raymond.

"Yes, Russia has newspapers, but they are by no means, the same as ours. Her press is not free; only such facts reach the people as the government permits. It is an autocratic press, not democratic, like ours. Furthermore, the papers are printed in the Russian language of which I can scarcely read a word. A pretty fix I should be in!"

"Well, you only have to give up the marriage. I do not see why you should care to marry, anyway."

Mrs. Raymond reached out for her fancy-work as she spoke. Rae rocked meditatively a moment or two before replying:

"Oh, as I told you, I love Paul, he is so good, and I think we might be better together than apart. Then—you know the old Greek commandment, 'Know thyself'—they tell me there is no school so well calculated to rid one of his illusions and delusions as the school of matrimony, no school which offers so severe a discipline," Rae smiled as she spoke, "and with all its drawbacks and imperfections, it graduates many sweet and wholesome people. Even some, who find it a failure so far as domestic bliss is concerned, declare the experience gotten by its means to be invaluable; they feel them-

selves to be larger-hearted, more merciful in their judgments of others who may have blundered and fallen short in their aims and endeavors."

"How can you be sure that Paul is worth making so many sacrifices for? Remember, he is half Russian. All men are charming as lovers, and for the most part, disagreeable as husbands."

"Well, I have improved every opportunity to find him out. I have been as indefatigable as that great critic, St. Béauve, says we should be in tracing up the character of an individual. I will read you what he says; it is so good."

Rae left her mother a moment and returned with a volume in her hand. She soon found what she wanted, and began:

"It is very useful in the first place to begin at the beginning, and when we have it in our power, to take into account the birthplace of our author (or the man we think of marrying) and the race to which he belongs. . . . We recognize and, as it were, recover the superior man beyond all doubt in his parents, and especially in his mother, his most direct and certain parent; we find him also in his sisters, in his brothers, even in his children.

"When we have obtained all the information possible upon the origin, the immediate

parentage and near relations of an eminent writer (or prospective husband) an essential point to consider, after the chapter of his studies and education, is the first group of friends and contemporaries among whom he was cast at the moment when his talent unfolded, when it filled out, so to speak, and assumed its manhood. These early associations give it an impress which it never loses, whatever its future development may be.

“ ‘Very great geniuses do without a group; they form centres themselves, and others gather around them. But it is the group, it is association, alliance, the active interchange of ideas, perpetual competition in presence of one’s equals and peers, which gives to the man of talent his attitude of mind, his development, which determines his value and weight. . . .

“ ‘It is impossible to try too many ways to become acquainted with a man—that is to say, one who is not quite divested of ordinary feelings and passions. . . . What were his religious opinions? How was he affected by the sight of nature? What was his conduct in relation to women and money matters? Was he rich? Was he poor? What were his general principles of action? What was his ordinary manner of living? Finally, what was his besetting sin or weakness?’ ”

"Well, have you found out what Paul's besetting sin or weakness is?"

"No, not yet. I think on the whole he is a new man. A new man, as I understand it, is one who has his heart qualities well developed; the new woman has brain power; he feels as well as thinks, she thinks as well as feels. Paul says the new marriage will be based more on the affectional nature, less on the stormy, selfish, passionate instinct. In the realm of the affectional nature he thinks our sex supreme, and accordingly, he thinks our sex should take the lead in martial matters."

"Then he would have the woman propose—is that it? In that case we should have fewer marriages than ever. Men are so contrary."

"As to the proposing part, men will always rush in where angels fear to tread."

"You have got that wrong, Rae. It is fools that rush in, not men," corrected Mrs. Raymond, glad to show herself wiser than her daughter.

"What difference does it make, mother, the terms are synonymous," demurely replied Rae, yet in her joking manner.

"Ah, after you are once married you will find out whom your husband considers the fool."

Mrs. Raymond sighed a little. She was

thinking how many stupid blunders she had made in the eyes of her gifted, brilliant husband. Indeed, his opinion of her at times had scarcely been higher than that of the original Adam in respect to his poor Eve. She said regretfully: "Every man thinks his wife either foolish or bad, just as Adam did."

"Eve should have bolted when Adam began to lay down the law in the Garden of Eden; then there would have been no one to raise Cain in the world. Taking the testimony of the Catholic plagiarized Bible with its first God-joined couple, orthodox marriage does not seem to have been a howling success even in the beginning."

"Oh such language, Rae, such language! For all the world just like that I have seen in newspapers, whenever I have dared to peep into one, in order to see something I knew you had been reading. What is the world coming to? flooded as it is by these dreadful modern papers, thick as flies, I see them everywhere; even at our church door, not long since, there was a woman just outside who handed us papers as we passed out. She had a funny poke bonnet on. The world is, I fear, approaching destruction. The last terrible days must be at hand."

"Yes, my child, I will gladly go to Russia with you. Anything to save you from the in-

fluence of the newspapers; I am sure they are of the Evil One, as our minister said the last time I saw him."

"Mother, I will warrant, that you were consulting him about me, how to keep me from this new tree of knowledge of good and evil. Well, it is time lost. The priest is not born who can scare me," said Rae, getting angry in spite of herself.

Rae's eyes were a snapping black as she paused. Her mother spoke soothingly:

"Dear, have I not heard you condemn our 'bloated Sunday newspaper,' as you sometimes call it?"

"True, mother, sometimes. But on the whole our editors are brave, alert, progressive thinkers, not skulking cowards with their backs toward the present and their eyes glued on the past. No wonder we are ever falling into ditches—the women especially—when we insist on following those who are blind to the present."

"Oh Rae, Rae! I fear you will be everlastingly lost. We are all praying for you, dear,—the minister and the church."

This was too much. Rae got up hurriedly, the book in her lap fell to the floor with a thud, and she swept out of the room. She was too angry to speak. After a while, however, she

returned to say, with her prettiest glance,
“Dear mother, forgive me. I have such a hor-
rid temper.”

And her mother replied :

“Yes, child, I know; you came by it hon-
estly.”

THIRTEEN

Orthodox marriage means perpetual ownership and tutelage of the wife by the husband. Heterodox marriage should mean, for the twain, liberty, loyalty and equality.

“Perfect love is harmonious identity of spirit.”

—*J. Elizabeth Hotchkiss, A. M. Ph. D.*

PAUL came early, as he had promised. He found the ladies seated in a rose-embowered veranda fronting the broad driveway.

The evening was warm and languorous; except at intervals there was no breeze; then the gentle movement of the air could be detected only in the responsive rippling of the leaves above and around them.

Mrs. Raymond and Rae, as usual, were dressed handsomely; the mother arrayed in soft grey silk, set off with trimmings of a delicate pink. She wore pink-tinted opal jewelry set with diamonds. Rae was robed in a satin frock of lilac rose. The waist was enriched with a fancifully cut yoke wrought with lilac and green, jet and silk. Her hair was arranged high on her head, and she wore no jewelry excepting a crescent diamond pin partially enclosing a glittering diamond star.

Having greeted Mrs. Raymond cordially, Paul extended his hand to Rae. As he did so, he noted with a lover's quick penetration the change which a few hours of deep inward conflict had brought into her beautiful face.

"Do I see Russia in your changed looks?" he asked, with tender solicitude as he held her hand for a moment within his own.

"Nonsense! Russia and I have as little in common as America and Rome. I must confess, though, that your wholly unexpected proposition has deeply affected me. It had not occurred to me that in the future you would wish to remain in Russia other than for a short visit each year, as has been your custom. I thought you were eager to become an American citizen—you have always spoken so highly of my country and of its progress toward its high ideal."

"You are right," answered Paul, "but after all, I seem to carry about with me a feeling of dislocation; something is always tugging at me, drawing me back to that land whose friends—aside from the ignorant groping masses—are so few. By friends I mean those who love their country as they love themselves, and desire only her good."

"Yes, I know, you wish to carry on the work your father began at what was, possibly, an inopportune time."

At this reference to his father, Paul's eyes filled with tears, and he silently bowed in reply.

Mrs. Raymond broke the expressive silence which followed, by saying:

"I should be glad, for my part, to go to Russia as soon as possible. Anything to get Rae out of the reach of our demoralizing newspapers."

She looked up at Paul as she spoke, and he was obliged to say something; accordingly he replied, mischievously:

"No, our newspaper-fiend will not be able to read the Russian newspapers herself. She will have to let me read them to her, and I will take good care, Mrs. Raymond, to read aloud only such portions as are proper for a young lady to hear."

Mrs. Raymond smiled for a moment, and glanced away from the young people to the gathering twilight; Paul in pantomime wrung his hands and shook his head in a woeful, amusing manner as much as to say:

"Have mercy, Rae! I was in a close place. You know very well that I will read the papers to you, every jot and tittle of them, if you wish."

Rae smiled back, though she was thinking:

"Ah, after all Paul has a little underground

Nihilism in him. Possibly his father had more than a little, which was the reason why he was transported for life to a Siberian prison."

The pantomime performance over, Rae rose, saying: "Let us go into the house, or else get our wraps, the air is growing damp."

"I think we would better go in; at least, I will do so. I have a cold already, and mean to retire early," and Mrs. Raymond also rose.

"Nu, then, let us go in and try that pretty duet once more."

The trio found their way into the old-fashioned Southern drawing-room. Before the violin-tuning process began, and just as Rae was in the act of opening the piano, Mrs. Raymond bade the young people good-night, thinking, "Poor Rae inherits her love for music from her father, from whom also, by way of heritage, so much else has come."

The duet was played to the immense satisfaction of both; then Paul, who was a master in strategy, called for several other selections of a patriotic, soul-stirring cast. He was determined not to approach dangerous topics until Rae was in the best possible mood. He had observed what a great influence music had over her, and on this evening of all evenings, needed its aid. At the close of a singularly fine and thrilling duet, composed by one of Germany's music-

mad sons, Paul observed how spirited Rae's touch had become, how glowing and full of fire her countenance, and he said, entreatingly:

"Come, let us consider those two burning topics, Russia and heterodox marriage."

Quite passively Rae allowed him to lead her to the sofa. Paul, himself took an armchair opposite. He liked when possible to face Rae and note the effect of his words as he spoke. He meant to proceed warily to-night, for he had made up his mind to carry two points, first, Rae's consent to go to Russia with him; second, her consent to a Roman Catholic marriage. He came to the point at once by remarking with some trepidation, "You received my letter to-day; tell me, what do you think of it?"

"As I said when you first came this evening, the point of view presented was so new, so startling, as to move me deeply,—even more, to shock me. I do not know what to think."

"Your mother seems pleased and quite ready to accede to my wishes."

"Yes, my mother is sincerely orthodox. She looks upon this world as a sort of vestibule where we are to be converted to certain theological dogmas in order that we may go to heaven when we die, and praise and glorify God everlastingly. Only in one respect, is she heterodox."

“What is that?”

“She will dress beautifully, even expensively, and enjoys all the luxuries of this life. But she is thoroughly orthodox in her opinions. She really believes that I shall be utterly and everlastingly lost if I refuse to accept the theological teachings of the orthodox Church.”

“That is a pity; for she must suffer keenly with anxiety concerning you. Do give her some surcease of pain by coming to Russia, and for a time dropping newspaper literature, except such as you obtain through me.”

“O, Paul, I cannot see that I have any part or lot in Russia. My friends consider me an ultra-American. Pray, what could I possibly do in autocratic, orthodox Russia?”

“My dear, a late Russian official has declared that in matters of religion, the orthodox Russian church allows the amplest freedom of faith and practice.”

“How can that statement tally with what one reads in the Russian penal code?—When it is translated—I mean. Of course, most of us Americans are at the mercy of translators. This afternoon I was reading in regard to this very matter, in Title II., relating to ‘Crimes against the Faith,’ and I came to the conclusion that there was little, if any freedom, allowed. Section 188 of the code provides, that if any

person shall leave the church (as I left mother's church not a great while since), even to join another Christian denomination, he shall be turned over to the ecclesiastical authorities for instruction and admonition; his minor children shall be taken into the custody of the government; his real estate shall be put into the hands of an administrator; and, until he abjures his errors he shall have no control over either. Section 196 declares, that all persons who shall be guilty of aiding in the extension of existing sects, or who shall be instrumental in the creation of new sects, hostile or injurious to the orthodox faith, shall be deprived of all civil rights and exiled to Siberia, or to the Trans-Caucasus."

"We need have very little to do with the church; you, nothing at all, if that seems best."

"In matters pertaining to everything else the same tyrannical regulations seem to exist."

"I think not now, Rae. But it is hard for Americans to understand Russian affairs. The two peoples are so different. In America, the masses, as well as the leaders, are adult in development and capable of self-government. In my country how different! Not many years ago twenty millions of Russia's peasantry, emerged from abject serfdom. Probably many millions of Russia's subjects would to-day find

no fault with the present government, which a Russian writer, not long since, has declared to be 'as natural and satisfactory to Russia as is the Republican form of government to the United States.' "

"Still, Paul, I am sure there must be something wrong. No less a person than George Kennan tells us that 'for a period of nearly a dozen years Russian governors, governor-generals and chiefs of police have had authority to issue imperative orders with regard to all matters that concern the maintenance of public tranquillity, or the safety of the state; to prohibit all public, social, or even private meetings and assemblies; to direct the closing of all commercial and industrial establishments; to remove cases from the civil to the military courts whenever, in their opinion, such a course is necessary; to arrest and imprison without judicial warrant and upon mere suspicion; to make researches and seizures in all dwellings, factories, etc., without exception; and finally, to recommend for banishment to Siberia any person whose character seems to them obnoxious, or whose presence is regarded by the police as prejudicial to public order.' You see my chances for going to Siberia would be mighty good, unless I collapsed promptly into a 'dead soul.' "

Rae smiled brightly at Paul as she finished, disclosing her pretty pearly teeth.

Paul was too deeply engaged in thought to return her smile; and to Rae the silence was becoming a little monotonous when he awoke from his reverie and said:

"I propose, if you will allow me, to take yourself and your mother to my ancestral home and spend my time teaching and helping my peasants in their development as Tolstoï is doing. He seems to be getting along well and to be doing a fine work."

"But, Tolstoï," said Rae, "is hardly a pattern for me; he is abjectly orthodox, a non-resistant of the most slavish type. I am heterodox and believe in eternal vigilance and eternal resistance to tyrannical encroachment. You admit in your letter that a new sort of slavery has put in an appearance in Russia, disguised as yet. I should think so, if what I found to-day in looking over some magazines is true."

Rae got up, stepped quickly into the library and came back bringing a Century Magazine. She began to read, apparently in the middle of the article by George Kennan:

"The evidence is not only complete, it is overwhelming, and no one who has attentively studied it can fail, I think, to see that millions

of the czar's subjects are engaged, and have been engaged for years, in a desperate struggle for a bare existence. What, meanwhile, has been the attitude toward them of the Russian Government? Has it endeavored to lighten their heavy burdens by cutting down the army and navy estimates, and thus reducing the taxes? Has it treated them with merciful consideration when they could no longer pay taxes that amounted, in many cases, to more than the whole net product of their lands? By no means! The taxes instead of being reduced have been increased; and have been collected with merciless rigor under the lash. "Everybody knows perfectly well," says the Russian publicist, Priklouski, "that with us corporal punishment is employed by the police as one of the commonest means of collecting taxes; but it is a disgrace, nevertheless, to our native land. The torture of the human body by authority of law exists as a fact before our eyes; whilst we, conscious of our inability to prevent it, can only say with the permanent board of the Taurida Zemstro, 'It is hard to defend a punishment which kills a man's honor and destroys his self-respect.'"

"I will not read the harrowing accounts given of the flogging of hundreds of heads of households. Supposing though we should be

put into prison for obnoxious conduct, we might be doomed to such prison life as is described a little further on. Listen, Paul.

“ ‘What astonished me most in the whole place was the married prisoners’ quarters, for in the large dormitory there were at least two hundred men, women and children, of all ages herded together indiscriminately. No words can fitly describe the scene. The evil faces, the babel of voices, the crying of children and clanking of chains, and above all the indescribable stench which seems inseparable from the Siberian prisons, all combined to make as hideous an impression as could be well imagined.’ ”

Paul responded seriously :

“I can’t say exactly what was my father’s fate ; we could never learn ; but I have understood that cultured, highly-connected, educated people, when exiled for political reasons to Siberia, are given comparative freedom and comfort.”

“Ah, here is a person who differs with you evidently. Further along in this same article I find from the pen of a certain Mr. Price :

“ ‘In the case of a well-connected and educated man sent from, say, Moscow, St. Petersburg, or some other important city in Russia, for a long period, to some remote Siberian village the punishment must be a severe one. From

the little I have seen of these villages on our way up the river, I can imagine no fate more dreadful than to be shut up alone, among a lot of ignorant peasants, with no books to read and entirely out of touch and hearing of the civilized world. Better, almost, to be buried alive!'"

"Yes," said Paul deliberately, looking straight into Rae's eyes; "if we go to Russia bent on engaging in reform work, I suppose we must nerve ourselves to meet any fate."

Rae returned the look in her arch, dauntless fashion:

"You must not think," she said, "that it is the danger ahead that frightens me, but rather my own unfitness for the work. Without free speech, a free press or the privilege of meeting together, I do not see how it is possible to carry on any kind of a propaganda, except as your Nihilistic compatriots were doing until summary vengeance put them down. I have never in my life been other than straightforward. I could not imagine myself working as Russia's great revolutionists have been doing, as for instance those wonderful young women, Sophia Perorskaya, Vera Zassulitch, Olga Lubolovitch, Alexandria Khoyerskaya, Sophia Bardina, Vera Lubolovitch, Anna Tarporkora, Eugenia Soobotin, Vera Figuer and Maria Soobotin."

Paul returned thoughtfully :

“I do not see any way to work as one could wish to work. That is the reason so many prominent Russian revolutionists have tried to help Russia from their places of retreat in other lands; but nothing of value seems to come of their efforts. It is likely the ‘underground Nihilists’ as you call them, did the best that could be done under the circumstances,—that is, they tried in secret and by stealth to plant the love of liberty in the hearts of the people.

“However, I do not ask you, Rae, to come to Russia and be wedded to her until death shall part us, and before you can possibly know whether you have really any part or lot in her, but I only ask you to go there with me, look the ground over, and, if possible, make an earnest effort in that direction. Alone I can accomplish nothing. I go back every year, and every year in despair I return to England. Remember how friendly Russia has been to your country, how at a very critical time in American affairs, she sent a fleet to New York with sealed orders.”

“Yes, I know; it was when the ruling classes of England were openly hostile to the North, and there was every likelihood that Great Britain would aid the South. Ah well, Paul,

in consideration of that act of loyalty to us, I will go with you and see what can be done. We might, as you say, help to improve the condition of your peasants."

"We are really needed there," said Paul, with emotion. "The last time I was home there were many complaints of the man I have in charge; he is a thrifty fellow, but inclined to be too hard. He needs watching. It makes me sad to think of my poor peasants! I brought with me a touching bit of prose about these same poor creatures by E. M. DeVogue. Suppose you read it to me; you read so well."

"Ah yes, I have already come across it. Isn't it a late translation? but let us enjoy it together.

"One might say of Northern Russia, that land ill divided from the waters, that it was a remnant of chaos forgotten of God. And now, imagine the effect of such a country upon the man thrown as a prey to its caprices. . . . You know, as well as I do, that no people has been more buffeted by more hands or harder hands, has undergone so many phases of servitude, domestic and foreign, or has been stained by so many invasions; you know that it has long drifted like a great waif between Europe and Asia. Stay! I prefer to give you a scientific theory; it will do as well as another.

To my mind, the Russian is the proudest of the soup he eats. You know it, the national soup; you recall it with horror; everything is found in it—fish, vegetables, herbs, beer, sour cream, ice, mustard, and what not, things excellent and things execrable. One can never know what a dip of the spoon may bring forth.

“‘It is the same with the Russian character,—it is a pot in which ferment confused ingredients, sadness, mania, heroism, weakness, mysticism and common sense; you may draw anything out of it at hazard, and you will always draw what you do not expect. If you knew to what this character can descend, if you knew the heights to which it can rise, and with what riotous leaps!

“‘You have just seen the peasants of my village, a hundred families benumbed for centuries upon this bed of snow, under the curtain of pines. You have said pityingly to yourself that this poor heap of men is hardly more than a prolongation of the forest as obscure, as impenetrable, as deaf, to the great echoes of thought that delight and transform the soul. These primitive beings to the minimum of ideas, of needs, and of activity with which human creatures can be content, have seemed to you without interest. Very well, try to rouse these sleeping souls; let a sentiment, a

flash of anger, an unexpected blow awaken them, and you will see surging out of nothingness enough martyrs, heroes, madmen to fill an epic.'

"Ah, that is fine. Yes, I will go with you, Paul Petrovitch. We will see what we can do to awaken your sleeping peasants."

"You are the dearest woman in the world!" ardently exclaimed Paul, no longer able to control himself. He rose, clasped Rae in his strong arms and pressed a passionate kiss upon her lips.

"Heavens!" exclaimed Rae, as soon as she could breathe, "Paul, I verily believe every word the Russian writer has said about the peasants, only from henceforth I shall include the rest of you as well. I had no idea you would develop into such an ardent wooer."

"Nu, now that you have waked one Russian soul, you are in duty bound to help his country," he replied, gaily. After a pause, Paul added, quite seriously, "But there is another matter yet to consider, or rather to reconsider. Do you know, Rae, I really wish you could be orthodox as regards our marriage? Since I have succeeded so well with one choice extract from an excellent writer, allow me to beg that you will read another by one of your own favorite authors, Junius Henri Browne."

Paul dived down into his coat pocket as he spoke, and brought out a paper which he handed to Rae. Then he retreated to his arm-chair that he might have the pleasure of observing her as she read.

“‘But under all circumstances it (marriage) is uncertain, even hazardous.’ (You see he agrees with me,” nodded Rae, stopping for a moment. “Yes, but read on,” said Paul.) “‘Very few realize, or can realize, what a terrible strain upon patience, discipline, character and humanity it is for two persons to be in the closest relation, year by year, to understand how custom may dull the finest sentiments, the tenderest emotions, the sacredest feelings. The sole way to judge fairly and completely of marriage is by actual experience. A thousand examples will teach nothing. What appears the worst at the outset may prove the best; what appears the best may prove the worst. Wedlock defies augury; it is continually an exception to itself. One may blunder dreadfully in taking or not taking a wife; which is the fatal step each man must determine for himself alone. Even if she were willing and glad to be his on any terms, he would not permit her to be other than his wife, knowing the feeling of public enlightenment on the subject. Love means esteem for and pride in the object loved,

and a sincere lover will not, if he can help it, expose a woman to condemnation and social ostracism. Whatever may be thought of marriage abstractly, it is under existing circumstances at least, a concession that should be made to society, and will be made by every man of honor.'

"Well?" queried Rae, having finished the extract that Paul seemed to have brought up with a special purpose in view.

"You understand me, I am sure. Junius Henri Browne voices my sentiments in this regard. It is quite true that no matter how a man may view marriage abstractly, under existing circumstances it is a concession which every man of honor should make."

"But I will not permit you to make the concession, so far as I am concerned; nor can I personally concede anything to tyrannous orthodox marriage vows. I will not soil my lips with them."

"Nu—I suspect you are right," said Paul, slowly and meditatively. "Doubtless the rigid orthodox vows have served their purpose, and should now give place to a less exacting marriage form. I think, though, Henry James was near the truth when he declared that in a 'disorderly condition of society, like that from which we have been slowly emerging, men of

wealth and power, men of violence and intrigue, would have laughed at the sacredest affections and rendered the family security nugatory, had not the Church fortified marriage by the most stringent safeguards.' ”

“Possibly all that may be true; yet I imagine it would be hard to tell how many crimes, secret or otherwise, have been the outcome of the indissoluble church marriage. Perhaps this consideration, together with their conscientious scruples against vows of any kind, influenced the Quakers, in repudiating the indissoluble marriage bond, so that for several generations they contracted marriages invalid in law rather than resort to the churches. But at last the legislature stepped in and provided for the civil recognition of their marriages.”

“Yes, I know. Would you be willing to be married according to the Quaker mode?”

“No, I am too heterodox even for that. Then, too, although their formula is sweet and simple, it is still a pledge that carries with it the idea that they are not to separate until death shall part them. Now, how in the world can any two people tell whether or not they can be loving and faithful to each other so long as they both shall live? or whether they are never parted except by death? I was reading the other day about some mutual friend bring-

ing your saint Tolstoï and that charming writer Turgeneff together in the hope to make them good friends once more—only friends, remember; nothing like so intimate an association as marriage. And how did they act?"

"Tell me. I do not recall anything concerning the episode to which you refer," said Paul, interestedly.

"Act? Like two quarrelsome children who are better apart. I will get the paper and give it to you, verbatim. Shenstone is the mutual friend and it appears he, himself, wrote an account of the affair. He says he brought them together after a state of chronic hostility, and placed Turgeneff on his wife's right hand at the dining-room table and Tolstoï on the left." Rae began to read:

"Knowing the importance Turgeneff at that time ascribed to the education of his daughter, my wife asked him whether he was satisfied with his English governess. Turgeneff began to sing her praises, and among other things said that the governess had asked, with English exactitude, how much his daughter might spend in charity. "Now," said Turgeneff, "she wants my daughter to collect the ragged clothes of the poor and mend them."

"And you consider that to be good?" asked Tolstoï.

“““Of course, it brings the charitable person closer to the poor,” replied Turgeneff.

“““And I think,” said Tolstoi, “that a well-dressed girl, who takes the dirty rags in her lap, acts an insincere and theatrical part.”

“““I request you not to say so!” said Turgeneff, with quivering nostrils.

“““Why should I not say what I am convinced of?” answered Tolstoi.

““I had no time to interfere,” continued Shenstone, ‘when Turgeneff said, pale with anger,

“““Then I will force you to silence by an insult.”’

“Well,” said Rae, drawing a long breath, “the upshot was that Shenstone ordered separate carriages for these two gentlemen, who though among the best of their kind, found themselves happier apart. Supposing now, Turgeneff had been a woman and the wife of Tolstoi, what chance for happiness would there have been for those two? And as they are persons incapable of committing an offence by which they could have become legally divorced, what would have been their fate?”

“Oh, they would have made the best of the situation, and gotten along somehow,” said Paul, smiling.

“Possibly, but it would have been a living torture for them, each conscious that they made

the other miserable, and yet must keep on doing so, until death separated them. No, I will not run the risk of spoiling your well-being and happiness, Paul Petrovitch. No orthodox marriage for me!"

This last was said very resolutely, and Paul knew that he must either yield to Rae Raymond or give her up.

"But how are we to get married in a heterodox fashion? There is no precedent, is there? Marriage, so far as I can make out, up to the time the church took it in hand, was generally a family affair, except where it was the custom for the husband to steal his wife."

"Yes, or a matter of sale. Then the woman became the property of her husband, instead of the property of her father."

"And you are unwilling to accept me for your owner until death, eh?"

The idea of owning a bright, progressive, American wife must have struck Paul rather pleasantly, for after this last speech he laughed heartily. Rae simply smiled, saying presently, in a thoughtful manner, "The Quaker ceremony seems the least objectionable to me of any that I know of; but as I told you a little while ago, it is based on the regular until-death pattern."

"What is the pledge they make?"

"Like this, as near as I can recall: 'Friends,

I take this my friend, A. B. to be my wife (or husband) promising through Divine assistance to be unto her (or him) a loving and faithful husband (or wife) until it shall please the Lord by death to separate us.'”

“I do not see anything wrong with that.”

“No; because if they did not obtain Divine assistance, and found themselves unbearably antagonistic, they could separate without either one having perjured himself. Yet, now that the Quaker ceremony is a legal marriage, it does not make any difference whether the Lord withholds his help or not, that is, so far as their being able to obtain their freedom is concerned, after they are once married. The state takes no cognizance of the Lord's doing in the matter, but insists that they shall remain legally tied; that is the law in this state. In other states the laws are more lax, but in none of them can divorce be obtained by straightforward people, who find themselves mismatched and incapable of descending to dishonorable practices, to free themselves from an unnatural and galling bond. As the law stands now, it puts a premium on baseness. I saw something on this very point in the ‘Westminster Review.’ Here it is. The article is a very able one, but I will only read you the latter portion.

“ ‘It is one of the peculiarities of this anomalous state of the law that it presses more severely on the upper classes than on the lower ranks of life, for if the infidelity be combined with the cruelty, divorce may be obtained. Now, amongst the most highly educated classes the man who treats his wife with physical cruelty is very rare. The higher the organization, the more refined and cultured will be the cruelty; and it is easy to imagine different kinds of torture administered with a placid exterior and the most gentlemanly manner. The uneducated man, who strikes or kicks his wife in a passion, simply because he has been accustomed to that style of argument from his youth, is very possibly a preferable husband to the polished profligate who with a smile can break his wife’s heart by polite cruelty. Yet a wife can never get a divorce from the latter; while the former, if his cruelty be combined with infidelity can easily be got rid of. Such a polished ruffian as Grandcourt in “Daniel Deronda,” for instance, could never have been shaken off, if he had not conveniently fallen into the sea; and in real life such a fortunate accident would never have occurred.’ ”

“ Nu, nu, that is all true. I agree with you most heartily. But how shall we go about our heterodox marriage? ”

“Well, you know we Americans can’t do anything without speech-making. Suppose we celebrate our marriage with some speeches, music and the customary breakfast?”

“Whom could we invite to make speeches upon so odd an occasion as an illegal marriage celebration?”

Rae knit her brows for a few moments, and appeared lost in thought, then exclaimed:

“Well, I declare, I cannot think of a person we know, but who is a sleeping soul on the subject of marriage.” Then she said with a laugh, “I am afraid you will have to make the speech yourself—preside at your own funeral as it were.”

“You forget, Rae, that I am only half American, and what is more, never made a speech in my life. I would be sure to become embarrassed and mix Russian and American phrases at a great rate. The people would think you were marrying a lunatic.”

Paul clasped his hands as if the idea of his speech-making was quite impossible.

“But,” Rae went on, mischievously, “you could certainly speak better than I. My father disliked women-speakers so much that I have always shirked speech-making. In this particular I have respected his wishes. I don’t mind, though, giving a reason for the faith that

is in me to those who shall honor us by their presence."

"Then it is agreed that we go to Russia?" exclaimed Paul, with animation, as if the heterodox marriage matter was a secondary affair.

"Yes, and it is agreed that we marry in a heterodox manner?" added Rae.

"Surely, and let us have our wedding celebration as soon as possible. I am eager, now, to claim you as my own, and to commence work among my peasants."

FOURTEEN

"But we must not promise what we ought not lest we be called upon to perform what we cannot."

—*Abraham Lincoln.*

ON the day previous to the one upon which the marriage was to take place, Mrs. Raymond was surprised to see George Washington at the side veranda unloading a mass of flags of all sizes, from an immense banner capable of doing justice to the ample proportions of a state capitol, to a multitude of smaller ones; together with a quantity of red, white and blue bunting.

Mrs. Raymond was thunderstruck. What could Rae have in mind now? Was she going to have a parade with flags on her marriage day? Paul had said so much about a heterodox marriage being something of a clandestine affair, that she had looked for anything but a celebration; but perhaps Rae was going to have this array of flags and bunting packed for Russia? Mrs. Raymond knew that Rae was extravagantly patriotic; still the quantity of these emblems at this time seemed out of place, and filled her with vague feelings of uneasiness.

She started to go upstairs to find her daughter and obtain an explanation. Rae was in the act of descending; they met at the foot and her mother made haste to ask :

“What in the world, Rae, are you going to do with all these flags and such quantities of bunting? You have enough for a Fourth of July celebration!”

“Glad to hear it, that ought to be enough to decorate the premises for my wedding. Don't you think so, mother dear?”

Rae lifted up her mother's chin as she finished speaking and kissed her in a dainty, pretty fashion.

“I was afraid you were going to have a parade to-morrow with flags and placards, saying Heterodox marriage! Heterodox marriage!!”

“Nothing so bad as that. I should be afraid if we attempted so startling an innovation, that Paul and I would land in an insane asylum. People in these days have been placed there, I imagine, with less cause. No, I am going to have the house decorated mainly with flags and the red, white and blue bunting, instead of altogether with flowers and greens, the usual orthodox mode. A heterodox marriage of the liberty order should have liberty symbols.”

Mrs. Raymond did not take part in the decorations of the place, which, however, went

energetically forward till a late hour of the night. Rae was the presiding genius, assisted by several young ladies, Paul Petrovitch, "George Washington," and "Abraham Linkum." Next morning Rae felt their work was a complete success, when her mother promenading the length of the drawing-room observed :

"Why, Rae, this puts me in mind of Faneuil Hall, when I was there one time, attending a Fourth of July celebration !"

Without stopping to reply, Rae smiled happily and hurried away to give some final instructions; she wished no delay or omission to mar that last hour at home.

The young couple were to be driven to the depot soon after receiving the congratulations of their friends.

They were going to Russia in a roundabout way, and would en route visit Chicago, and London, besides of course, New York. Rae had business in Chicago; then, there was Retta and her wonderful baby to congratulate and kiss. As to Paul, before he left the new world, he wished to view to his heart's content that most marvellous of American cities. It was arranged that Mrs. Raymond should meet them in New York and embark with them for Russia.

An oddly mixed group assembled in the flag-bedecked rooms that afternoon.

Paul and Rae dressed in becoming travelling suits, took their places in the drawing-room, under what Rae called, a "Liberty Bell." It certainly was formed like a bell, though wrought chiefly of flowers instead of being cast in metal.

Standing before the assembled company, Rae said :

" Kind friends : As neither Paul Petrovitch Alferiew, who has chosen me for his wife, nor I, who have chosen him for my husband, are in sympathy with the marriage rite as administered by church and state, we are compelled to adopt a simple home celebration of our marriage without the assistance of either minister or magistrate. Should the state at any time revise the present marriage rite and *no longer require us to promise what we cannot be sure of fulfilling*, then we shall hasten to be married in due legal form.

" Doubtless we should not hope to receive congratulations on so heterodox a step, but, if thus far you believe in us, believe that we, according to our light, are striving to be true, to do the right as we understand it; then we shall hope to receive your cordial Godspeed as we take our departure for Russia. We go there to make us a home and to 'cultivate the land,' in the Lavretsky sense of the word.

"As Paul Petrovitch asks for some little form in connection with this heterodox marriage celebration, I have complied with his wishes, and we shall now proceed in imitation of the Quaker mode. He will repeat his part verbatim, only omitting the phrase 'by death,' because we think God sometimes separates married people before they die. I being heterodox will take the privilege to vary my part."

When Rae had finished, Paul clasped her hand in his and repeated solemnly:

"Friends: I take this my friend, Rae Raymond, to be my wife, promising through divine assistance to be unto her a loving and faithful husband until it shall please God to separate us."

Then Rae said:

"Dear friends, in the hope that our lives may be more complete, and that we may be enabled to render better service to God and to Humanity, I now take Paul Petrovitch Alferiew to be my husband, and will endeavor to be unto him a faithful, loving wife, so long as it shall be to our mutual happiness, and so long as we are one in the sight of God."

Whether it was because the action of the young couple opened a rift in the clouds which yet overshadows human freedom, through which those present could better see her fair propor-

tions, and look forward to a time when people can be trusted to marry, as they are now trusted to serve God, according to the dictates of their consciences; or whether it was solely because of their personal friendship, for these two, certain it is, that no orthodox couple ever received warmer congratulations than did Rae Raymond and Paul Petrovitch Alferiew.

* * * * *

Five years have passed and in that time civilized nations have come more than ever to realize that if Russia were to ally herself with any great power, these two could overturn the political world.

In the event of any such coalition, Russia could command an almost irresistible body of fighters. Once aroused these hordes are capable of the wildest fanatical excesses. Some of her sons appreciate that in these ignorant, powerful multitudes lurk the possible seeds of Russia's destruction. Hence numbers of noble-hearted, far-sighted Russians for love of their country, are devoting their unselfish lives to educating and elevating the childlike people of the soil.

Not the least among these teachers, are Paul Petrovitch and his devoted wife, devoted not only to her husband, but to his country, her

country. They have not revisited America, but those who have been their guests on the vast Russian estate, report that in no country could servants and master be more mutually trustful and trustworthy. It is upon this basis that they meet in their patient attempts at betterment. If the work of the teacher is hard, how much harder are the efforts of him who is learning! This, Paul Petrovitch and his wife never forget, and such has been their tactful kindness that their people are coming to have patience and a love for the right, and to know that there is no royal road to improvement.

THE END.

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